

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY



VOLUME 154 NUMBER 2

AUGUST 1934

LABOR'S FIGHT FOR POWER

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CAPITAL and labor face the beginning of the second year of the NRA embattled in a struggle for power and domination. This is to-day the primary political and economic problem facing the United States, from which it is difficult to recede because capital cannot afford to compromise and organized labor is unwilling to yield on the essential question of the form of collective bargaining. Organized labor, sensing the sympathy of President Roosevelt for the under dog, expected the American Federation of Labor to become established as the sole representative of the entire industrial and commercial working class. In effect, the A. F. of L. envisaged the NIRA as recognizing, in its collective-bargaining clauses, exactly this position, and girded its loins to make the most of its opportunity.

Nevertheless, for a year the United States was enjoying a honeymoon, an era of good feeling. As far as possible, responsible men sought to avoid embarrassing the President in his vast experiments. Although labor unions could not be prevented from calling

sporadic strikes, none occurred which might have been of cataclysmic proportions until the honeymoon was tapering into a condition which a Chinese friend of mine once described as 'all moon and no honey.' During the current spring and early summer months strikes increased until the actual mass warfare in Toledo forced the government and the people to realize that the struggle between capital and labor in this country is not over hours or wages or division of profits, but over power, over domination. Organized labor now seeks to dominate industry through the NIRA.

Capital was at first nonresistant. The aftermath of the depression, the dehydrating of the principal capitalistic reputations in America, the Blue Eagle campaign, the failure to recover overnight, the stream of propaganda against bankers and financiers emitted by various agencies in Washington, produced a mass impression that the collapse of the capitalist system was inevitable. The average industrialist could not escape this almost universal mood; he became part of it. In his

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various conferences over NRA codes, it was impressed upon him constantly that a new day was dawning in which his rôle would have to be subordinated to the wishes of the state, and that collective bargaining was one of the state's wishes. But, he asked himself, did collective bargaining force him, under the law, to accept the A. F. of L. as a partner in the management of his business?

In all countries in times of stress, most capitalists are easily cajoled into making drastic compromises, in the hope of preserving enough of their economic interests intact for the day when the pendulum swings backward. Italian and German Fascism represents just such a compromise — namely, an acceptance of the Marxian principle of the totalitarian state, while at the same time retaining private profit. The American capitalist was ready to adopt such a compromise under the NRA, but he did not realize that Fascism, no matter what its American derivative is called, involves the maintenance of a balance between capital and labor by the state, with the right of the state to intervene at its discretion in the interest of either class. When the American Federation of Labor assumed that it alone could speak for labor, only a minor fraction of which it represented, then capital began to fight back — not organized capital, for that does not exist in the United States, but individual employers of labor, in defense of their stake.

It is this struggle for power which is now taking place, complicated by the fact that some of the best field work for labor is being directed, not by the American Federation of Labor, but by Communist unions, which initiate strikes from which the Federation dare not recede. The conflict between the Federation and the Communists is historically as significant as the struggle between the Federation and John Weir.

In these articles I am seeking for the fundamentals in this struggle for power. To grasp the present characteristics of the battle, it is necessary to go back to the beginnings of organized labor in the United States, to that startling personality Sam Gompers, to the peculiarly American mobility of labor, to the unfeudalistic rise of a moneyed aristocracy from labor, and to the fact that in this essentially democratic country the lines between lord and serf, the manor and the cottage, the bourgeoisie and the peasants, have never been tightly drawn and are not so drawn to-day. A laborer may still become a capitalist, and vice versa, as surprising as that may seem. This adds a psychological factor to the struggle of organized labor for dominance which exists nowhere else.

II

Organized labor in every country except the United States recognizes the class struggle as the inevitable social phenomenon attending the capitalist system. No matter whether laborers outside the United States belong to unions which acknowledge the Socialistic Second International or the Communist Third International, they all acknowledge the credo of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: —

'Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains.'

Samuel Gompers, who served as President of the American Federation of Labor from its inception in 1886 to his death in 1924, except for one year, did not believe this doctrine. He held that in the free soil of the United States, within the liberty guaranteed by the Constitution and the unusual economic opportunities attending the geographic and political characteristics of the land, labor could achieve equality with capital without revolution, without even the mild opportunism of reformist

Socialism. Sam Gompers, the idealistic organizer of skilled labor into an upper stratum of bourgeois workers, fought Socialism at every convention of the Federation and defeated it.

In his autobiography, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, he tells how suspicious everyone was of Karl Marx's International Workingmen's Association, which had been established in London in 1864. He says:—

Our American press seized upon the custom of addressing its members as 'citizen' as proof of their identification with the French Commune. Later a more real basis for disfavor developed through the domination gained by a group of intellectuals who were more interested in the thrills of propaganda than in achieving practical industrial betterment. I watched the period not fully understanding and certainly not appreciating how the mistakes of those years were to help me in developing effective policies in later years.

The American Federation of Labor has not, at any time, made the mistake of permitting itself the thrills of propaganda even for very mild socialistic measures, such as the minimum wage, which Secretary of Labor Perkins has favored and the A. F. of L. opposed, lest the minimum might become the maximum. The Socialism in the minimum wage has always frightened the leaders of the American Federation of Labor, even during the current depression. From Sam Gompers to its present President, William Green, the A. F. of L. has been a capitalist organization, rigidly supporting 'rugged individualism,' the union representing not the organ of a class-conscious struggling proletariat, but rather a mutual benefit society of craftsmen in a particular field of work, who unite for mutual betterment in the hope that before long they also may become capitalists. As long as American laborers assumed that they might in a reasonable time, by hard labor and thrift, become

capitalists, they resisted the European conception of the class struggle.

The institution of organized labor cannot be understood in the United States without an appreciation of the mind and character of Sam Gompers. Born in the slums of London of an impoverished family of Dutch Jews, he knew hunger, disappointment, unequal opportunities for education and happiness during much of his life. Practical, unwavering in his loyalty to his job, which came to be the organizing of skilled labor, he hewed carefully to a pragmatic line. No distant vistas of human equality moved him; no thought of a dictatorship of the proletariat determined his policy. He wrote:—

My personal knowledge of Socialists extends over a period of six decades. My judgments have not been based upon secondhand information. . . . I know Socialists from practically every approach. I think I have met a representative of every one of the fifty-seven varieties. . . . According to my experience, professional Socialism accompanies instability of judgment or intellectual independability caused by inability to recognize facts. The conspicuous Socialists have uniformly been men whose minds have been warped by a great failure or who found it impossible to understand fundamentals necessary to developing practical plans for industrial betterment. These were Socialists who were profoundly pessimistic about existing society. They started many organizations to supplant trade-unions, and all failed.

And therein lies the whole of the philosophy of Sam Gompers and his associates. They must not fail. They must not work for causes that might fail. They must limit themselves to practical cures in which the capitalists themselves might join, as they actually have done since the turn of the twentieth century. That is still both the aim and the tactics of the American Federation of Labor.

An eight-hour day, high wages, bet-

ter working conditions, a Bureau of Labor Statistics, and even an independent Labor Secretary in the Cabinet — these were desiderata to be worked for, even to strike for. But there must be no Socialism, no Labor Party, no recognition of labor as a class. Collective bargaining meant only recognition of the union and the union label in an industry.

III

It was Mr. Gompers's conception that the worker came to have a vested interest in his job, not only as a protection against capital, but also against other laborers. He said, 'I held and hold that if a union expels a member and he is deprived of a livelihood, in theory or in fact, in so far as he and the dependents upon him are concerned, it is capital punishment.'

More than that, the theory of the vested interest of the particular member of a craft union in his job has led the Federation to adopt a policy of violent opposition to immigration, to limit union memberships and apprenticeships, to restrict output, so that workers in a union would protect other members by producing only an average quantity of goods based upon a general consideration of the relationship of total output to total union membership. It faced the fact that mechanization counteracted this tendency, and replied by a constant demand for shorter hours and higher wages to equalize the relationship between the worker and the machine.

Finally, it has led to terrific struggles between craft unions, often involving strikes — as, for instance, when metal replaced wood, displacing carpenters in the interest of metal workers. It was this conception, then, that drove the Federation to oppose the industrial union and to adhere strictly to the craft union; that is, woodworkers must belong to the carpenters' union even if

they make barrels for a brewery and thus are more concerned with the brewing than with the furniture industry. The emphasis upon craft unionism was in direct conflict with the characteristic and apparently inevitable development of industry in the United States, but the Federation adhered rigidly to the craft union, which is one of the reasons why it was never able to organize the steel or motor-car workers.

These policies of the American Federation of Labor prevented organized labor from including the whole of the American working class in its membership, for as new industries appeared the interests of the worker were not limited to one craft, but extended to embrace the entire industry. In 1930, 38,000,000 Americans, excluding farmers of all types, were engaged in gainful occupations. Say that this number has been reduced during the depression to about 28,000,000. The total membership of the American Federation of Labor, which does not include 500,000 railroad workers, is 4,000,000. In 1932 it was just half this number, but the impetus of the NRA doubled the ranks to a figure which cannot be accepted as representing voluntary membership. Even the highest total that organized labor can present proves indisputably that in the United States, after half a century of organized effort, the workers of the country remain predominantly not part of the Federation. In fact, whereas the United States is the principal industrial country, it is sixteenth in the list of organized labor.

The basic assumption of the capitalist craft union is that labor differs from capital only occupationally and that the personalities in either group are interchangeable. A stenographer, like Samuel Insull, might become one of the three or four leading capitalists of the country; he might, as he has done, lose his money; his son might become the

engineer in a power house with a union card in his pocket. Or, a better example still, James Farrell might be a laborer and become the President of the United States Steel Corporation. He remains prosperous and important, and is an example to puddlers in Pittsburgh of what can happen to a man who 'gets the breaks.'

Therefore, within the craft union, rugged individualism is strict doctrine, for each man sees himself as a Charles Schwab or a Henry Ford. Hope burns eternal in the laborer's breast that he may become a boss. In the cloak and suit industry in New York, known colloquially as the 'Yiddish hardware trade,' men switch from cutter to boss and back again seasonally. Only the professional union worker, who has really become a 'white collar' capitalist, has a direct interest in keeping the union alive.

As long as the worker has hopes of becoming a boss, he dare not identify himself too positively with the labor movement. Therefore, except when Woodrow Wilson supported the Federation during the war and Franklin Roosevelt gave the appearance of supporting the Federation during the recovery, it has been a comparatively weak body.

IV

Up to the time of the depression, then, organized labor in America consisted of a relatively small number of skilled workers in tightly controlled craft unions, which sought to protect the 'aristocrats of labor' in their jobs. Most of the workers, particularly the unskilled laborers and the 'white collar' groups, were unorganized, unprotected, and frequently were as bitterly fought by the craft unions as by the capitalists — most often more bitterly. Capital, on the whole, supported such progressive measures as labor favored

when it could be proved that said measures (such as the eight-hour day and the six- or even five-and-a-half-day week) would increase the purchasing power of labor. It was assumed that there was no solidarity among the capitalists (compare the attitude of Gerard Swope or George F. Johnson of the Endicott-Johnson shoe company with that of John Weir or Henry Ford), therefore there need be no solidarity among the workers. In fact, the American Federation of Labor sought to win the good will of the capitalists through such an organization as the National Civic Federation, and even broke a strike (the steel strike) in the interests of the capitalists because it feared the rise of the Communists within the unions more than it feared capitalism.

The assumptions of Mr. Gompers and his associates — William Green, the present President, John L. Lewis of the Mine Workers, and Matthew Woll, the arch anti-Communist — were in many respects justified by the course of events. Wages for workers rose phenomenally in the United States; the hours of labor were reduced from the outrageous fourteen and sixteen hours a day which Gompers knew as a cigar maker to the proposed thirty-hour week of the New Deal; child labor, in ages below fourteen, has been eliminated in most industries and in most parts of the country; the skilled laborer, organized in his craft union, is actually earning more than a similarly stationed 'white collar' person and is socially a part of the middle class. During the period of prosperity, plumbers, for example, were better paid than school-teachers.

From this pragmatic point of view, organized labor has, up to the depression, been in a strategic position to speak for all of labor. The American Federation, alone of all workers' groups, projected a respectable, well-oriented,

conciliatory philosophy which capitalism could understand — namely, that as long as the condition of labor improves there is no need for a revolutionary policy. The fact that the principal industries, such as steel or motor cars, remained unorganized did not matter so much, for the Federation could cripple the motor-car industry by calling out the makers of an essential part, who might be organized into, let us say, a carpenters' craft union.

The Federation maintains its offices in Washington; it dominates the Department of Labor; its officers have been and are consulted by Presidents, and maintain a close relationship to Congress. The machinery of control of the so-called national or international unions (to include Canada) was purposely designed to be loose, so that each union might serve its own interests without involving the whole of organized labor in a general strike, which the Federation always opposed. The representatives of organized labor, well paid and adequately served with union funds for expense accounts and propaganda, maintain themselves in power, so that continuously since 1886 the American Federation of Labor has been dominated by one group, most of the present leaders being either appointees or associates of Samuel Gompers. During this long period, except for one year, the Federation has had only two presidents. Since the average worker in an organized trade is dependent upon his union card to get and hold a job, he dare not risk the ill will of union officers lest disciplinary measures deprive him of his livelihood. No new ideas, no new men, no changed attitude toward changing times, affect these labor leaders. By long experience they know what works, and to that they adhere. No philosophy of action moves them but the pragmatic test of past experience.

V

The depression, however, has directed thought to new problems. In the first place, the capitalist theory, held both by employers and by organized labor, was that all Americans enjoyed equal opportunities to better themselves. In no European or Asiatic country is such an assumption possible, for the vestiges of feudalism in social and economic systems function in such a manner that inequalities are recognized even when they have ceased to be realistically important. Free land was the basis of American equality. If a man could not earn a living in one place, he could move to another. He could even change his trade or craft easily. He might be a skilled cigar maker in New York, but he heard that a new town was developing in Colorado; so he went there and opened a grocery store. In time that grew into a department store. Thus he easily changed from an organized laborer to an unorganized small shopkeeper, to a capitalist.

Since the depression, this process has become impossible, and it may not be possible again after the recovery. There is no longer any free land; therefore the movement of workers is restricted, and their opportunities are, in this respect, limited.

Furthermore, there are a number of dying cities and dying industries. In each case there is an important displacement of labor, and a downward movement from an organized to an unorganized condition. For instance, the cigar maker who became a capitalist bettered himself, but the West Virginia coal miner who becomes a hillbilly is reduced socially as well as economically. Whereas, in the past, the movement has been upward toward the middle class, the depression and the slowness of recovery frighten workers into the assumption that in the future

the movement will be in the direction of a lower standard of living.

This factor in the situation becomes increasingly important as mechanization displaces skilled labor. We have nothing to do with the interesting controversy between the scientists and the economists on the social effect of inventions and improvements. The fact remains that during the past year a dearth of skilled mechanics became so evident that General Motors opened a school for mechanics to protect itself against the universal movement in the direction of unskilled labor and a type of specialization which limits a mechanic to skill in a tiny fraction of a wholly mechanized industry. Actually, while labor fears the effects of mechanization and unemployment as imperiling its standard of living, capital fears the same causes as tending to reduce the number of really skilled workers and to destroy the purchasing power of a very important element in the American market.

Furthermore, it is becoming probable, to state the case very conservatively, that civilization is approaching the crisis which technocrats, Communists, and many conservatives believe to be inevitable — namely, that the machine will finally produce more than can possibly be consumed, that there is a statistical limit to consumption but none to production. Economists decry this phobia as ridiculous, but workers fear its deadening effects upon their lives. They fear to become nursemaids to robots.

It is impossible for either capital or labor, after the experience during the depression, to ignore these fears, to disregard the possibility of their realization. It is still impossible to be sure that anything is altogether right. The fact remains that after four years of effort, including the amazing labors of President Roosevelt, at least 8,000,000 men are out of work who ordinarily

would be gainfully employed. And of the 5,000,000 who have been put back to work many are employed in industries artificially stimulated by the government.

Labor cannot ignore this fact. It almost vitiates all the experience of the past. It almost makes the pragmatic sanction for the A. F. of L. policy a theorist's dream. For clearly a programme involving the United States in a possible seven-billion-dollar deficit, and which aims directly at finding work for all the population, has not been successful.

The relationship of the NRA to the labor problem will be discussed in a subsequent article. Here it is sufficient merely to indicate that increased wages accompanied by an increased cost of living have already proved to be a wholly inadequate formula for solving the problem either of unemployment or of increasing the purchasing power of those who are employed.

VI

Capital frankly feared the consequences of this failure. It has willingly submitted to the NRA as an alternative to revolution, which in 1932-1933 seemed to be imminent not only in the minds of politicians, who utilized this particular bogey to frighten capital and labor and the consumer into an acceptance of the emergency measures involved in the New Deal, but also in the minds of the larger capitalists, particularly the bankers, who were prepared to accept any compromise to avoid street fighting. Trifling so-called farmers' revolts, a long series of smaller strikes in 1932-1933, the unmistakable breakdown of private relief agencies, colored the views of those in authority and of capitalist and labor leaders, so that for a while the word 'revolution' seemed to be on every tongue. Then the revolution did not occur, and

capital and labor settled down to the task of determining their rights and relations under the new dispensation.

It appeared at first that the New Deal definitely recognized the American Federation of Labor as the sole body with which all American workers, the thirty-eight million of them, would be required to affiliate themselves, through one of the A. F. of L. craft unions. Business agents in the field actually spread the glad tidings that, just as collective bargaining had been recognized, so had the A. F. of L. been recognized as the sole agency for labor in collective bargaining. In consequence the A. F. of L. membership doubled in a year. If labor troubles in this country become unbearable, it will be important to determine whether the government, the NRA, or the Federation was responsible for this wholly inaccurate and meretricious interpretation of the labor clauses of the NIRA.

Resistance to the A. F. of L. rapidly developed in two sectors of the labor movement. At the extreme left stand the Communists who are opposed to craft unionism, who support the idea of the vertical union — that is, one union to include the total labor of a single industry, and all syndicates of labor to be joined into a single, class-conscious soviet of the proletariat. All workers in a steel mill, whether steel workers or carpenters making crates, electricians or office help, chauffeurs or washerwomen — all would belong to one union which would speak for the whole industry.

On the extreme right are the workers who favor the 'company unions.' They prefer to join in a voluntary association of workers employed either by a single company or at a single plant. Under this system, the workers in Bethlehem Steel have no organic relationship to workers in United States Steel. Or a

better example might be that of the Endicott-Johnson shoe company, where the conditions and profits of labor are so favorable to the workers that association with other shoe workers could in no way benefit them.

The American Federation of Labor has opposed the one big union, the vertical union, as syndicalistic. Syndicalism is Socialism. Syndicalism is in the United States allied to Communism. The early quarrels between Samuel Gompers and the Knights of Labor were over this question of vertical organization, for it does not differentiate between skilled and unskilled labor, between the higher and the lower brackets of labor. Furthermore, the Knights of Labor included all workers in their organization, except lawyers and saloon keepers, and this appeared to Gompers as impracticable, because it was his theory that, whereas it would be impossible to make gains for the whole of labor on some broad, abstract generalization, it would be possible to make small but specific gains from year to year in particular industries for special groups of workers.

In practice, up to the time of the depression, this theory proved to be correct. Whatever benefits labor won were the results of craft strikes. The general strike, which is inevitable in the 'vertical union,' has never been utilized by the American Federation of Labor. But the effect of this policy, although it kept the Federation respectable, was to withhold from workers in less important industries the support of the 'aristocrats of labor.' It drove workers who might otherwise have been in the Federation either into the company union, where capital protected them, or into Communism and the class struggle.

Long before the depression, the I. W. W. fought the American Federation of Labor on this issue. The

I. W. W., under the leadership of Big Bill Haywood, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Tresca, and a large number of extremely radical workers and intellectuals, just before the Great War, was increasing its influence so rapidly that the Federation attacked it all along the line. The workers witnessed the spectacle of a labor organization standing shoulder to shoulder with capitalists in opposition to another labor organization. Although the war intervened to smash the I. W. W. because of its internationalism, its pacifism, its support of Soviet Russia, the idea of syndicalism, of the vertical union, never died. Furthermore, the American Federation of Labor came out of the struggle tarred as the enemy of unskilled labor.

The failure of the I. W. W. left the American Federation of Labor the only organized spokesman of American labor as a whole. Small leftist unions came into existence in large industrial cities, particularly in some of the needle industries, but no Communist union has yet developed the strength to challenge the authority of the A. F. of L. Within the A. F. of L. unions, however, the Communists planted 'cells' who bored from within against the Federation's craft unionism in the direction of 'vertical unionism.' And now the Communist unions, whenever they can, start a strike and then leave it to the Federation to see it through. This tactical trickery was particularly apparent in the recent motor-car strike in Detroit.

VII

Whereas, to the American Federation of Labor, Communism and the vertical union are synonymous, the fact remains that Fascism, the strongest opponent to Communism, accepts the vertical union as the inevitable next step in the organization of labor. In the Italian Fascist corporation, the syndicates of labor are all organized

vertically, in many respects on the basis and plan formulated by the I. W. W. The whole of labor is in one big union, controlled by the government and representing the point of view of the Dictator. In the United States, Fascism has made little headway as an organized political group, but there is a decided drift in that direction, and wherever Fascism is favored, under that name or by the implication of expressed ideas, the vertical union is favored.

Thus the paradox is apparent that the Communists and the capitalists agree that the vertical union is the next step in labor organization. From different points of view they both oppose the craft-union ideology of the American Federation of Labor. They both envisage the workers of an entire industry within one organization — the Communists in the world labor organization, the capitalists in the company union.

The principle underlying the company union is the community of interest between capital and labor in the prosperity of the particular company from whose enterprises particular capitalists and particular laborers expect to make money. Labor, in this instance, is not class-conscious but company-conscious. It seeks to protect, not the working class, but individuals on a single company's pay rolls. It is not concerned with the general problems of the workingman, but with the specific welfare of those in one industrial unit. In most instances, openly or surreptitiously, the company union is supported and strengthened by the company itself. As its opponents put it, 'the bosses sit on both sides of the table.'

If the laborers in the company unions were as opposed to them as the A. F. of L. and leftist labor leaders generally stipulate, they would have utilized the advent of the New Deal, particularly

during its early phases when a play was made to strengthen organized labor, to swing into line with the A. F. of L. Actually the company unions have continued to function even in the automobile industry, which was to have been a test case involving the very existence of the company union.

As will be shown in another article in which the motor-car strike will be analyzed in detail, the A. F. of L. suffered a severe defeat and the company union was recognized as equal to the American Federation as an instrument for collective bargaining. The theory upon which this decision was reached emphasized the fact that the workers themselves had to determine what organization and what leadership would represent them in collective bargaining. This theory, the employment of which surprised capital as well as labor, is antagonistic to the existence of the American Federation of Labor and of any national syndicate of labor unions such as both the Communists and the Fascists advocate. For if the workers in each shop can decide questions affecting the whole of labor, on their own, without recourse to any national organization and without regard to the general interests of labor, then no national labor organization can survive. Thus the existence of the company union is a challenge to the whole theory of organized labor, and the recognition of the right of the company union to represent workers in collective bargaining will be fought by all sections of organized labor with increasing ferocity.

VIII

The question is often asked, why American laborers prefer the company union to national organized labor as advocated either by the craft unions of the American Federation of Labor or by the vertical unions of the Com-

munist and Fascists. Many psychological as well as economic factors influence the views of the workers, particularly the total lack of class-consciousness on the part of the average American. He does not feel that he is very different from his boss, except that he has less money. Why, then, should he organize as a 'laborer'? He prefers to organize as an element of an industry in which the boss gets more money than he does, but in which he hopes some day to get more money too — or even to become a boss himself.

Furthermore, many bosses feel that they are essentially laborers, but get more compensation because they do a different type of work. Gerard Swope, for instance, has proposed a plan for dealing with the problem of capital and labor which fits rather accurately into the category of guild socialism. The General Electric Company has a company union in which labor and management function together in the interest of all, capital receiving its reward in dividends because of the competence of both labor and management. In practice this is an improvement upon Mr. Ford's methods, for under the Swope plan labor has an important voice in policy, whereas Mr. Ford functions as a benevolent dictator, providing higher wages and lower hours as he sees fit. Under such plans as those in operation in General Electric or the Dennison Manufacturing Company, the vested interest of the worker in his job is amply protected, while at the same time he directly benefits by the success of the company for which he works. He is, then, a capitalist participating in the profits resulting from operations.

As capitalists, such workers do not wish to be involved in the difficulties of other workers. They have a good thing, and they don't want it to be imperiled. They fear that if they permit decisions to be made for them

by 'outside' labor-union officials their own advantages may be reduced. For instance, if there were a paper workers' union with international officers and they called a strike in that industry, the Dennison workers might find that they were striking to establish conditions less favorable than those they already enjoy. They might be striking against their own interests.

Again, the American Federation of Labor has never won the confidence of the highest grades of American labor. The railroad brotherhoods, the most exalted stratum of American labor, have consistently kept out of the Federation. Many workers dislike the internal politics of the Federation, the swift logrolling in the unions and at the annual conventions which has kept the same crew in office year after year since its organization in 1886. It would appear that only death can separate an A. F. of L. official from his job. Younger and ambitious workers find themselves up against the stone wall of Sam Gompers's contemporaries. They sometimes feel that the officers of the Federation are more anxious to be recognized as the spokesmen of labor than to make gains for labor. They come to conventions, and the steam roller keeps them subdued. Such younger men find that their special abilities bring them to the fore in the company union. Furthermore the close relations between company-union officials and the management brings in its wake certain personal advantages, even to the extent of making it possible for a really competent man to step into management.

Finally, the element of racketeering has terrified and disgusted many decent men who find themselves subject to the will of the business agent of the union. Labor racketeering is as old as organized labor. Back in the days of the Knights of Labor, the Home Club was a racketeering labor organ-

ization which, disguised as labor, worked in the interests of the bosses. Gompers tells how certain labor leaders were actually working in the interest of the street-railway companies instead of the workers. The building trades have always been involved in racketeering, business agents of the union slowing or speeding up work as it might be to their advantage. It is not always possible to prove racketeering by labor leaders, but the problem is so serious that the American Federation maintains a bureau to exterminate it.

In New York City in recent years, labor racketeering has become a scandal. In a conflict between two unions in the motion-picture industries, theatres were bombed, men were beaten, and huge sums of money disappeared. This particular row led to court action. Municipal officials are constantly at odds with teamsters' unions and watchmen's unions in the markets, where the farmer becomes a prey to the union business agent, food products being destroyed if the union officials are not being taken care of by the market men. These cases also come into court. In connection with the delicatessen workers' union, a man was actually 'bumped off,' and the union, fully chartered by the A. F. of L., was shown to be a corrupt and brutal organization.

In labor racketeering, the most advantageous crime to the union officials is the 'kick-back.' This device is very generally employed, and although it is often exposed, it is always tried again because it is so profitable. The kick-back operates in the following manner.

A wage scale is set either by law, as in government contracts, or by agreement between capital and labor. The worker assumes that he is to get so much per day or per hour for his work. At the end of the week, he is required to return or kick-back part of his wages to a designated person, often a foreman or a bookkeeper. It is the function of

the business agent of the union to see that labor agreements with regard to wages and hours are enforced. He knows that on a particular job the kick-back is in operation. He ignores it. He condones it. The workers assume that he gets his share. If they complain, they are thrown out of the union on some disciplinary charge. When a worker loses his union card, he cannot get a job. He is dependent upon the officers of the union for his daily bread, and they can deprive him of his livelihood without trial, without any due process of law. Usually, therefore, he is silent.

Here is a specific and typical case which actually occurred in New York. Charles Nelson was employed as a bricklayer by the C. and W. Construction Company which held a contract for part of the work in the erection of the 369th Infantry Armory. Nelson testified that on his first pay day he was told by the timekeeper to kick-back part of his wages at the rate of \$3.40 a day. The stated wages for this work was then \$15.40 a day. He gave the timekeeper \$13.60. On the next pay day he refused to kick-back. On the third and fourth he also refused. So he was laid off and could not get reemployment. His union did not protect him.

This story has been repeated many times, but most workers do not lose their jobs. They pay the kick-back and are silent. They are afraid not only of losing their jobs, but of being hit on the head by gangsters employed to maintain discipline.

It must be repeated, in fairness to the American Federation of Labor, that it wars upon labor racketeering constantly, but its loose organization, the virtual autonomy of a union once it is chartered, the necessity of maintaining a political machine in the Federation so that its officers may not be voted out at an annual convention, its strug-

gle with Communist cells within the unions — all these factors weaken the effectiveness of its endeavors in this direction.

Another form of labor racketeering is the special assessment, described in one union as being for the 'invisible government' — that is, for gangsters and racketeers. In this particular union no records were kept of expenditures and when a worker asked, 'What is the reason for this new assessment?' he was hit on the head with a gavel. The laborer has no recourse, for if he is disobedient he loses his card and he cannot get a job.

The constant presence of labor racketeering has lessened the respect of laborers for the A. F. of L. unions and for the labor leaders. Decent workers are not anxious to become the prey of the union business agent or the shop steward. They do not want the risk to life and happiness that racketeering involves. And the racket is inevitable in the craft union as it is to-day organized because it is so easy. Occasionally the workers make trouble, but most of the time they are too frightened; they take the bitter with the sweet. In all the scandal over the kick-back and extra assessments and racketeering in general, no charges have been brought against either a company union or a Communist union.

IX

The American Federation of Labor, basing its policy and tactics upon craft unionism, — loose, irresponsible, unharnessed, subject to sporadic strikes, to racketeering in the unions, — is unrelated to the necessities of American labor. Its theory of craft unionism is a deterrent to the solution of special problems in particular industries. It can produce no evidence that its members work under better conditions or gain better wages than the workers in

company-union enterprises. No organized workers are better paid for the same kind of work than in Mr. Ford's factories; no workers enjoy better conditions than in the Endicott-Johnson factories. Unless some emergency, such as the war or the recovery, provides a political recognition of the Federation, most Americans who are gainfully occupied avoid the Federation, because they do not directly benefit by membership in it.

The period of recovery has reopened the fundamental question of the process by which labor in this country is to gain the greatest possible reward for its services. During prosperity, labor's benefits were so comparatively large that labor problems practically disappeared from political consideration. During the depression, more than one third of all American workers found themselves without employment, in a condition of dependence upon relief agencies, disheartened, frightened, almost fugitive. Recovery brought high hopes of another prosperity, but it was accompanied by an emphasis upon the exclusive rôle of the American Federation of Labor as the spokesman of labor. Early in the New Deal, it was assumed that a way had been found to reestablish prosperity by shorter hours, higher wages, the abolition of child labor, and by government protection of collective bargaining. But prosperity did not come. Instead, the cost of living rose to vitiate the benefits of higher wages. Desperate, workers struck for still higher wages, still shorter hours.

Here we are caught in a vicious circle, for the cost of these benefits must be taken up in the price of commodities, thus increasing the cost of living, and incidentally making it difficult for the farmer to purchase manufactured goods. As the cost of living goes up, the demands of labor will increase. The textile strike is a case in point.

Production had to be curtailed to relieve an oversupplied market. Labor immediately demanded a wage increase which would provide it with an income equal to its present income in spite of reduced productivity. Capital could not meet this demand on any calculable basis. The strike settlement was wholly inadequate because it dodged this question. Unless textile prices come down to a ratio with farm prices so that that large consumer of manufactured goods, the farmer, can buy, then labor cannot hope to get 1929 wages out of an industry which cannot sell 1929 quantities at 1929 prices. There must be a logical and economic ratio between prices and wages. Thus far we have only been provided with political opportunism.

The vertical labor union, whether a company or a Communist union, is the only union system which conforms with the current organization of mechanized industry. The craft union was suitable for piece workers. Sam Gompers could always imagine himself sitting at a bench rolling cigars while someone read a German pamphlet or sang a melody to entertain these highly skilled workers. In his autobiography he grows quite sentimental at one point when he finds that, after years of being a labor organizer, he can still roll a cigar.

But the present-day worker is not really a skilled laborer. He tends a machine. He might be put to tend another machine. The machine is skilled, not the worker. The machine is the producer, the worker its assistant. Watch the belt in the Ford Plant or the A. O. Smith Plant in Milwaukee! How much skill does a worker require there? What apprenticeship does he need to oil a robot or to turn a single screw all his working days? In the Machine Age he is no longer the artisan of the mediæval guilds. He is a direct product of mechanization. He is easily

replaced because he has become unskilled.

From that point of view, he is either interested in the working class as a whole because universal betterment involves the betterment of his condition and he becomes a Communist, or he is interested in the welfare of his particular company because that is where he gets his money — the more money the company gets, the more he gets. So he supports a company union. Whichever it is, his safety lies in industrial syndicalism, in the vertical union, in an organization which includes all the workers in his industry no matter what work they do. For, if there is to be unity in labor, it can only be within a particular industry.

The company union is faulty only when the capitalist insincerely and dishonestly uses it as a weapon for the exploitation of labor. When capital and labor unite, within the American capitalistic structure, to profit mutually from the success of an enterprise, as is apparent in such enterprises as Dennison and Endicott-Johnson, then the craft union, nationally organized, serves no useful purpose. The American

industrialist, however, cannot always be trusted to realize that labor is entitled to a just share of the profits of industry, and the worker has to be vigilant lest he be exploited. The American Federation does provide a national defensive weapon for labor; but the A. F. of L.'s insistence upon craft unionism, and its opposition to the company union solely on the ground that it does not join the Federation and pay dues to it, are harmful to industry.

During the coming months the Federation will wage war in every industry on the sole principle that it alone must be the agency for collective bargaining between capital and labor. If, as I have tried to show, the principles of the Federation are not consonant with the organization of American industry, then there can be no justification for accepting the Federation as this sole agency. Nevertheless the fight will be waged, and both capital and labor will have to protect themselves against the dominance of labor — and, for that matter, of industry as well — by a comparatively small but politically effective minority.

(Other papers on the American Federation of Labor will follow)

REMARKS: NONE

BY WILLIAM WISTER HAINES

I

I WAS sorry for Regan. He was a good lineman when that woman left him alone. He was n't the best I ever seen. He was too young and he had n't been around enough. But at that he was good enough to rate a job in a good wire train. And if he could of had a decent chancet at breaking in he would of been hard to beat. But he did n't, and he ain't likely to get it now until they electrify hell.

I needed another lineman and I was just about to tell the Man to send me out one when Scarfe got me to put Regan on. We'd cleared up one morning and the men was hanging up their tools and taking off their overalls in the shop car. The night's work was all done and I was writing it up on the swindle sheet when Scarfe come up to the drafting table.

'I got a friend I want to get a job for, Jig. What's the chance of getting him into this train?'

'Is he a good lineman?'

'He's as good as I am on transmission work.'

'That'd be good enough for me if this was transmission work, Scarfe. But it ain't. How is he on catenary?'

'I don't think he ever worked none on railroad electrifyin'.'

'Then why don't he get him another job at tower building or wire stringing? They's plenty of that going on.'

Scarfe looks kind of funny. 'Well, Jig, I think it's his wife. All the trans-

mission work's out in the sticks. I think she kind of likes to live near the bright lights, so he wants to get a job here.'

I was surprised to hear nonsense like that out of Scarfe. He's got right good sense. So I arced at him a little.

'I suppose if this guy's wife taken a notion she wanted to see the West Coast, I'd have to take this wire train out there and electrify some of them redwood trees, would n't I?'

'Lay off it, Jig. This guy's a friend of mine and needs a job bad.'

'Sounds to me like what he needs is a divorce or a club to beat some sense into that woman. The whole rig's bum, Scarfe. You say yourself this guy's never been in a wire train. What good would he be to us out here rebuilding this interlocking at night while he was wondering which of them bright lights was shining down on his woman? You know what this job's like. You can't afford to have a guy on it that's seeing blue eyes where he ought to be seeing red lights. Don't look so huffy: I meant signal lights.'

'He's a good man, Jig. I could carry him a few nights, and after he caught on he'd cut it fine.'

'He might. But I can get men that'll cut it fine the first night.'

'Jig, I'd like it mighty well to . . .'

'Sorry, Scarfe. But as long as I can get men that know the difference between a cross-track feeder and a rivet

gun, it's only fair to the company to do it. Sorry, but it's no dice.'

Just then the engineer come in for me to sign the release slip for the engine, and the other linemen scrambled out to ride it back to the transfer. Scarfe he did n't go with 'em, though. He waited till they was all gone and him and me was the only ones left in the train. Then he come over to me again.

'Jig, I rigged this wrong. I should of knowed better and I'm sorry. Now I want to tell you the truth about this Regan guy.'

'All right, Scarfe, let her rip.'

'Me and Regan was buddies for years. Clumb buddies on half a dozen big transmission jobs. He was as good a lineman as ever wore a belt, considering he was young. Then he met up with a broad out there in the sticks where some guy had ditched her. He fell for her something awful. She seen he was making good money, so she marries him. He'd been shooting craps and he had a roll you could of used to guy a gin pole with. So she got him to quit his job and go to town to spend it. He done it. Then when his dough was gone and he wanted to look up another job and make some more she would n't leave town. He went off alone finally and come out to the job where I was at. He was useless; like to fell out of every tower he clumb. All the time he was worryin' about that woman. The Man finally canned him. But he goes down to the pool hall and knocks off another little roll with them dice. And then he goes back to his wife and they spend it. That's been going on now about three years. The reason he don't get a transmission job is he's blackballed with every company in this part of the country. I've got him into jobs before; he done fine with 'em till that woman got to bothering him and then it's the same old story. I figured she'd quit him and so the best thing was just

to let it drift till she did. But she ain't going to quit him. She ain't getting any younger or fancier and she knows how good them dice can treat him when they take the notion.'

'And he puts up with it?'

'Laps it up. He thinks the sun just comes out to light up them gold teeth of hers.'

'Somebody ought to lay her out real careful on a pile of broken bottles and run a steam roller over her a few times.'

'I'd like to burn her heart out with a steel torch, but I doubt if a torch'd cut into where it's at. That would n't do Regan no good, noway. He's still nuts about her and always will be till he gets over it by hisself. You can't say nothin' to him. I tried when he was first fixing to marry her. All that come of it was him pulling his pliers on me. Yes, he did — and him and me good friends, too. I taken his pliers away and throwed 'em out a window and told him to wise up. But he would n't wise up then, and he ain't since. And now he's in a bad way. His belt and tools is in hock, and unless you'll give him a chancet they might as well stay there. I don't think he never worked at nothing but line work, and he would n't want to, noway.'

'You say he's a good lineman.'

'Yes. He'll catch on to railroad work fast. I think he might come out of it and get shut of this broad if he could get back on a good job again. I hate to pester you about it, but it's serious. I kind of feel like it might be the last chance he'd ever get. I was n't never going to say nothing about this, Jig, but I would n't be here talking to you if it was n't for him. He done me about the same kind of favor I done you last winter and . . .'

'O.K., Scarfe. I did n't know it was that serious with you.'

Scarfe had done me what he called a favor. It was on a breakdown. He'd

clumb about forty yards through a mess of broke and burning wire a asbestos squirrel could n't of crossed to where I was hanging in my belt so cold I did n't even know my overalls was on fire. He beat out the fire and carried me over to a body beam, walking and crawling all the way along wire I would n't of hung a lunch bucket on. Him and me had beds side by side in the hospital for almost a month, but I never did learn the whole story till the day they come in to give him the medal.

'Bring him out to-night, then. But remember, I ain't promising to keep him unless he can cut it. I'd like to do you both a favor, now I know all about it, but this work's too risky to fool with a man that ain't on his toes.'

'Much obliged, Jig. I'll carry him till he gets going.'

II

Regan come in with Scarfe that night about ten-thirty. He was a nice-looking guy, not big like Scarfe, but not no runt. He looked soft like he had n't been working for a while, but he had a kind of a good-natured face and good steady eyes. And he had a way about him I liked, not nervous or jerky, but quick and easy-moving. You could see he was a lineman right off; he walked like one and he talked like one.

'I guess Scarfe told you,' he says to me, 'I ain't never been in no wire train before.'

'Yeah. Ever use steel skates?'

'No. I never clumb no steel pole in my life. I've used wood hooks a bit, though, and clumb some towers.'

'Well, don't try no steel skates at night. You can practise on 'em in the mornings after the sun's up till you get used to 'em. In the meantime you just do what work they is to be done on the decks of the tower cars or off the lad-

ders. I guess you've worked off ladders, ain't you?'

'Yeah. Plenty in transmission work.'

'All right. Working on these decks will be new to you. Watch out you don't trip on some of the scrap hardware and spill off the top. It's a long fall down to the tracks when them towers are pulled up. Have you worked much around hot wire?'

'I've worked twenty-three and forty-four and sixty-six hundred with rubber gloves. And I've worked clearance rigs on transmission crossings. What's the voltage here?'

'Fourteen thousand. We work it all on a time-clearance basis. Most of this railroad yard has to be hot for service all but a few hours of every night. So don't never go up on deck till I've told you the wire's dead and you've saw the ground sticks on it. And when me or Beckett, the straw boss, says, "Everybody down!" that's what it means. If you fool around on deck after hearing that, you'll find yourself about half cooked before you ever get to hell. And remember, even when we got the power out on one section of wire, all the other wire in the yard will most likely be hot. You keep close to Scarfe. He knows every kilowatt in this yard by its front name and he'll keep you away from them.'

'Yes, sir.'

Regan was all right. He was green at catenary, but you can't expect a man to come right off transmission work and savvy a railroad job the first night. It's too different. In transmission work you just got towers to build or wire to string out over open country. You can start out in the morning and work till your tail drags with nothing to bother you. In railroad work you always got to wait till you can get the use of the track. And in a hot yard you got to wait till track and power clearance synchronize. And then you got to get your train moved in to where

you want it, your towers pulled up to the right level, your deck lights set, and your men to work. And you got to do it fast. And you got to keep your work in hand so that you can tie it up quick and get your train out faster than you taken it in if the signal tower suddenly needs your track to handle traffic on.

Regan was n't used to rawhiding the work for short shots and then having nothing to do, but he caught on fast and he was smart about planning his work so he would n't never foul us if we had to move sudden. And he was a good lineman. He could handle a rope or walk wire or steel or hang off a ladder with anyone. He clumb nice, too — quick, light-footed, and easy-moving. He was n't used to working at night with only flood lights for light, but he never said nothing about it, and in a couple of nights he was running around in the dark like a mole.

And if he was green on catenary he made up for it by hard work. He was always the first guy to follow me and Beckett on deck when the train stopped at a new place. He'd be the first guy to grab a hook ladder when I put the spotlight up on some work that could n't be reached from the deck. He was handy about stretching out the blocks when we was getting ready to tension. And he was quick to help swing out a outrigger when we had to lay on one track and do our work out over the next one. He never batted a eye about working on that outrigger. The first time he seen us use one, it was n't no more than locked in its stirrups when he walks out on it. I calls to him:—

'Regan, hook your belt on that messenger wire. You're just about six foot above the smokestack of any freight that wants to go under you there. If it taken a notion to puff just right, it'd knock you and that outrigger, too, three foot in the air.'

'I figured if one come under me I'd just step clear of the outrigger and stand on the wire till it went by.'

'That's right. But keep your belt hooked over the wire. That's what you're wearing it for.'

'Yes, sir.'

A freight did take a blast at him that same night and knocked him off the wire, but his belt held him all right. And when it was over he just went back to work, not paying no more attention to it than he done to the way the other guys kidded him.

Scarfe helped him a lot. Them two was real buddies. Before Regan come along, Scarfe he'd always been a loner. He was as good a lineman as I ever seen, but he mostly worked alone and he did n't hang out none with the other guys offen the job. I figured he might of been born that way or he might of had him a buddy got killed. But when Regan come to work and I seen them two together I knowed why Scarfe had n't never paired up with no one else. Him and Regan worked together all the time and they was a sweet pair. What Regan did n't know about catenary Scarfe did, and he learnt Regan fast. They'd arc at each other all the time.

'All right, Mr. Scarfe, if you stand there much longer your feet'll grow roots right down through the deck!'

'Well, just as quick as you get your hand out of the company's pocket and get up that ladder I'll hand you these blocks!'

Regan was good about the hot wire, too. Anybody's apt to be nervous around hot wire. And they was many a night's work in that yard we done with the gang just eighteen inches from a look at the Holy Ghost. But Regan did n't mind it, and he was n't careless, neither. He'd look it all over in that calm way he had and then he'd get in good position and go right to work on the cold side of a set of insulators just

as steady as if he'd never heard of a lineman burning up. He watched close how we put the ground sticks on to protect us, and when he come up on deck after us he taken Scarfe aside.

'This wire running right across the deck here is the one we seen the ground sticks put on, ain't it?'

'Yeah. It's dead. You noticed how Jig put his hand on it when we first come up, did n't you?'

'Yeah. But how about them insulators down there by the end of the deck behind Beckett?'

'That's a air break — cold on this side, hot on the other. That's what Beckett's standing there for, so no one won't forget and reach or walk past them insulators.'

'I would n't put my hands acrost no insulators in this yard if I seen a bolt bag full of gold pieces hanging on the other side!'

I noticed when we holed up in a siding after that first shot Regan he borrows a blueprint off me and, instead of spending the slack time drinking coffee and throwing water and rough-housing like the other guys done, he got Scarfe to explain a air break to him and to learn him off the prints about sectionalizing circuits. In the morning after we'd cleared up and the other guys had went home, Regan takes a pair of skates out of the shop car and puts in about a hour of his own time practising climbing a pole with 'em. In a few days he could run up and down a steel pole like a shadow.

III

In short, Regan caught hold good, and after a few nights Scarfe come around to see me again.

'Well, what do you think of my boy, Regan?'

'He's still here, ain't he?'

'Yeah. I knowed you would n't fire him when you seen how good he is.'

'You was right about him. He's a lineman and he's going to be a good catenary lineman. How's his home life coming?'

'He's still living with that woman. And he won't say no more about it than he ever would, so I guess she's got him down as bad as ever. But that don't bother you, does it?'

'Hell, no. It ain't my business, just so he comes in here sober at night. As long as his work lasts like this, he's O.K. with me.'

It lasted till the night after he drewed his first pay. If him and his woman was fighting before that, they was n't no sign of it on the job and that was all I give a damn about. Pay night was a Saturday. It was a good one, too. We'd had some overtime and they must of been right close to a hundred bucks in the linemen's envelopes. When I give Regan his, he taken a look at the amount where it's wrote on the outside and grins.

'Thanks, Jig.'

'Nothing to thank me for, Regan. You earned it. And if you keep on like you been doing, you'll earn a lot more like it.'

As luck would have it, the railroad was running a lot of Sunday excursions to the seashore that morning, and after about three-ten we could n't get no track at all. I had the engineer run us up on a siding and I hung the train up for the night. I put the boys to work cleaning up tools, inspecting and reeving blocks, and generally overhauling our equipment. But they was n't a night's work in that, and a little after five o'clock we was done. Beckett he takes out his pay and looks at it.

'That either ain't enough or it's too much! Shoot a fiver, Joel!'

'Wait a minute,' I says. 'If you guys want to shoot craps in here, I'll go over to the office. Keep a good lookout, though.'

I'd signed the engine off, so I did n't go back to the train till about seven. All but Scarfe had rode the engine in.

'Well, who done the winning?'

'Beckett and Paul Renford. The rest of us lost our shirts.'

'Somebody's got to if anyone wins. Regan lose too?'

'Yeah. They dry-cleaned him.'

'How'd he take it?'

'Good. He don't never squawk over losing. His woman will, though. She'll holler till her teeth get hot.'

I don't know how much hollering she done, but that night Regan come in to the train with a black eye. It was n't one of them real good ones that come free with a quart of whiskey and a loose tongue, but it was black, all right. His hands was n't cut or bruised none, neither, so I just about knowed where that black eye come from. They ain't many men around could of give Regan a black eye and kept from bruising his hands too. I did n't say nothing about it, but of course the other guys kidded him. He did n't seem to mind it none; he just taken it with a kind of a foolish grin until Joe Mitchell made that wise crack.

'How did you say you got it now, Regan? You've told us so many ways I've forgot which of 'em you meant.'

Regan grins so no one would n't take it serious and says:—

'Oh, I got it off a swinging door.'

Joe he looks at it real close: 'Looks to me more like it was a swinging whore!'

And then Joe was picking hisself up off the floor and it looked mean till I got between 'em.

'If you guys want to fight, just wait till I write out your time!'

Joe he spits out a tooth and some blood and I guess he would of went for Regan if he had n't saw I had my pliers out.

'I ain't looking for no fight, but it's

a hell of a note when you can't make a good-natured crack without a guy getting sore and busting your teeth out!'

'Just one tooth!' I says. 'Regan, are you through fighting or do you want me to fire you so you can spend the whole night at it?'

'Naw,' says Regan. 'I don't want to fight no more. But if any of the rest of you guys want to pop off at me about this lamp, make sure it's *me* you're kidding.'

Joe he was a pretty decent guy. 'If I'd knowed it was a broad give it to you, Regan, I would n't of said that. If you want to fight some more, I'll meet you anywhere you say, but if you don't, it suits me.'

'Forget it, Joe. I'm sorry I got so hot. I should of knowed you did n't mean nothing by it.'

So that was that, and them two did n't fight no more.

IV

But they was more wrong with Regan than that eye. I found it out directly we went out to work. About one-twelve the special-duty man come in and says we can have one of the new tracks all night and a twenty-five-minute shot on another right off. I told him to take us out and uncouple so we could leave one tower car and half the gang with the all-night job and then I'd take the engine and the other tower car and the rest of the outfit and cruise around the yard working when and where we could.

I left Beckett with some of the guys where they was a lot of work could be done in one place. I left Joe Mitchell with him. And I taken the other half of the outfit and Regan with me. It don't never do no harm to keep two guys that just been fighting from working too close to each other till you're sure they really are made up.

Regan he was n't worth his weight in broke insulators. He fouled up the blocks every time we went to use 'em. He cut a piece of auxiliary wire before I even had time to mark it, so it was just the grace of God we did n't have to run in a new piece two hundred yards long. He put a pair of pull-off bars on upside down so they would of tore the smokestack off a locomotive, let alone the pantograph off a electric, and he just generally fouled the whole job.

If we'd been working on stuff that was new to him I would n't of said nothing. But this was just the same kind of work we'd been doing all week and he should of knowed better. I told him so, too, and he just nods kind of listless-like and says he's sorry.

About four o'clock we got a few minutes in the clear and I sent the men down into the shop car to eat. That is, all but Regan. He was just finishing wire-locking a crossover when I had to move the train, so I left him out on it, and as soon as we got the track again I run the train back in under him and picked him up. Then I sent him down to eat. In a minute I went down to the shop car to get a blueprint and there set Regan drinking coffee but not eating nothing.

'You better eat your dinner, son. We're going to work right through till seven-fifty-six this morning.'

'I ain't got it with me, Jig. I'll make out all right with just some coffee.'

'How come you ain't got it with you? If it's over in Beckett's half, go after it. You can walk over there in a few minutes and no one wants to work on a empty gut.'

'No. It ain't over there. I did n't bring it out with me. I'll make out all right without none. I ain't so hungry to-night.'

I starts to ask him why he'd come

out without a dinner, and then I remembered. His woman had been too busy blacking his eye to make him up a dinner. So I says to him: —

'They's a couple of extra sandwiches in mine I ain't going to eat. Help yourself to 'em.'

I almost had to force him to take 'em. But when he did he forgot about not being hungry and eat 'em like he had n't saw no food for a week.

Eating did n't help him none, though. All the rest of that night he was dopey. If we'd been working real close to anything hot I'd of sent him down off the deck till we got it done. But we was n't. Down on them new tracks where we was you could get a lot of clearance all around you. And what with having a fight in the train, and it being the night after pay, I told the special-duty man to keep us there all night. It ain't always you can work like that. Mostly you got to expect your gang to be just as good one night as the next or fire them that ain't. But this was a long job and we was working seven nights a week on it. And when you're running a show like that it pays you to use your head about timing the work to suit the men as much as you can. Regan and Joe was n't neither of them sore-heads and I figured that by the next night the whole outfit would be steadied down all right.

V

They was, too, all but Regan. He was just as useless as he'd been the night before. He just set around when we was cleared up like he was sulking to hisself. It was n't over Joe, neither. Him and Joe spoke to each other civil when they come in that night and they buddied about carrying some rolls of guy wire over to the train before we went out to work.

When we got out to work, Regan was the first guy to follow me and

Beckett on deck, but up there he did n't seem to do no good. And that night we was out where it was hot all around us. We was working on Four, which was n't hot, of course. Out in mid-span we had about eleven foot clearance from Three and Five, which was hot as the devil's fork. But they was places at the cross spans, and where a couple of crossovers run through Four, that was n't eighteen inches from the kilowatts. And that's no place for a man that ain't got his whole mind on the work.

I watched Regan close to see if he'd snap out of it. He did n't do nothing wrong I could put my finger on, but he did n't snap out of it, neither, so I says:—

'Boys, I want all but Scarfe and Paul and Beckett to lay back when we come to these spans and crossover breaks. Three men's enough to do all we got to do there, and it's too close to the hot to have a bunch hanging around. You other guys do the work out in the mid-spans.'

That suited everyone and it give Regan less chance of hurting hisself or someone else. But at that he like to kilt us all.

Out in one of the spans of Four they was a crossover dead end running diagonal acrost the span and about ten foot above deck level. It was red hot and we could n't get power clearance on it. We had to go in under it to work, but before I run the train in there I says to the gang:—

'Boys, they's a hot one crossing over above us in here. We got plenty of clearance to keep under it if we take it easy and work low. But remember: it's right up there all the time even if the lights don't show it. I don't want no one to climb up on the messenger or even to pick a ladder up off the deck. And anyone waves a hanger rod or tie wire over his head might just as well be waving to the undertaker to come

get him. We're going in now: *watch the move!*'

The engineer run us in under there nice and easy and we went to work. For a few minutes the gang done fine. We was putting on hangers and the men kept them copper rods down low till the tops of them was tight to the messenger and could n't get up to kiss the kilowatts above us. And they was good about handling the tie wire in rolls instead of cutting it off in lengths. We got the span tailored in good shape and I goes down to the end of the deck to sight it. The hangers mostly fit nice. In all but one place that riding wire was flat enough to of rode a pantograph a hundred miles an hour. One hanger was about a half inch short, though. The men was stationed along the length of the deck standing back from the wire so I could see it to sight it. They was out of the light and I could n't see who was nearest the short hanger, so I says:—

'Somebody take that fourth hanger off. Put a longer one on there and tie it till I can sight it and tell you where to cut it.'

Regan was nearest to it. Instead of taking the old hanger down first, he stoops over to the deck and grabs a long section of new hanger rod. As he come up with it he swings it way up over his head. I could n't do nothing. I would of throwed my pliers at him, but I was fifty foot down the deck, and even if I hit him square on the head it probably would n't stop the lifting motion of that hanger in time. So I hollers, '*Flash!*' and throwed myself face down on the deck. It would n't help Regan none if I got my eyes burnt out watching it. The other boys had all saw it and I heard them hitting the deck as I did. I closed my eyes and wondered if they was a scrap of tie wire or a drop cord touching me, but I knowed better than to look.

Then they was a hell of a crash up

the deck, but no flash or stink, and no crack like a breaker switch makes when a hot one bites something. I looks up and there was Regan sprawled out on deck with the hanger still in his hand and Scarfe on top of him. The other men begun to look up and wipe the sweat off their faces, and Scarfe he gets up off Regan kind of slow, like he was tired, and wipes his face.

'Scarfe, how far did you have to jump to get to Regan?'

'I don't know. I did n't stop to figure.'

'He was standing right by me,' says Beckett. 'I thought of jumping and figured they was n't time.'

We figured it up, and Scarfe he'd jumped about seven foot. He'd started that jump just when the rest of us figured it was hopeless and ducked to save ourselves. And he had n't knowed for the whole of them seven feet that them kilowatts was n't coming to meet him, let alone be there waiting for him if he was late. I doubt if they was six inches between the end of that hanger and the hot crossover when he hit Regan and knocked him and the hanger down. Regan he'd cut his cheek a little when they hit the deck, and the way the blood stood out on the white of his face was a sight.

'Scarfe,' he says, 'I'm much obliged to you.'

'All right,' says Scarfe.

I could n't let it go that easy, though. It was too close.

'Regan, go down to the shop car and iodine that cut. And then you can wait there till I come down.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Boys, I ain't got much to say about what just happened. You all seen it and you know as well as I do how close it was. And you know where most of us'd be if it was n't for Scarfe. Let's not have no next time. Now, a couple of you get a hanger on there and let's get this span done.'

Some of the guys put a hanger on, and Scarfe he followed me down the deck to where I was sighting it.

'Let Beckett sight that, Jig. I want to talk to you a second.'

'Sight this, Beckett, and then move the train down under the beam and start the outfit riveting.'

Beckett nods, and Scarfe and me slip off to a corner of the deck out of the way of the work.

'Jig, I want you to give Regan another chancet.'

'I figured you would. That's how come me not to fire him right where he done it. But it's a serious business, Scarfe. If it had n't been for what you done, our shop-car boy and the grunts would still be clearing the burnt meat off the deck. I don't want to can Regan, but you can't have stuff like that going on.'

'You ain't going to have it going on. He's got good sense. He seen what happened and he'll be all the better for being that close to a burning. It takes something strong to make a impression on a guy with a woman like that on his mind. He's had it, and he'll do all right now.'

'I ain't thinking so much about him as about the rest of the gang. If he was the only one he could hurt, it would n't matter. But he ain't. They's at least three good women I know of come within six inches of being widows tonight just over Regan having his mind on that broad of his. You know that ain't right.'

'I know it. And you got a right to can him if you want. But if you'll give him one more chancet I'll see he either snaps out of it — or quits before he does hurt someone.'

'Well, I'll have a talk with him. I've give him some time to be thinking this over and maybe he'll be ready to talk sense.'

'I'm right obliged to you, Jig.'

I went down and had a talk with him.

I did n't cuss him, but I talked to him stiff. And he taken it good. He was sorry and he knowed I had a right to can him. I told him I did n't want to can him, but I'd have to unless he come out of it and done better. I told him he was a good enough lineman to know this ain't a job for a man that can't keep his mind on it. He nods and then he looks at me kind of funny.

'Jig, was you ever married?'

'Hell, no. And I never fell off no real high pole, neither. But if I did I'd try not to hit the guys under me as I come down.'

He caught right on. He did n't say nothing for a minute or two, and then he nods.

'I see what you mean. I'll try to do better.'

'You'll have to do better if you're going to stay here. I got no kick on your work when you keep your mind on it; it's good. But you either got to get shut of whatever's worrying you or get shut of the job.'

'I been worrying about private affairs, Jig. If it come to what you say, I'd have to get shut of the job. But if you'll give me another chancet I think I can run 'em both all right.'

'One more, then. And I want to see you make out with it.'

He thanked me so hard I hated to hear it. And for a while after that he done fine. He'd caught on a lot to railroad work now, and him and Scarfe was as good a pair as I ever worked. They was n't no crap game in the train the night after the next pay, neither. I don't never mind a gang shooting craps if they ain't no work to be done. But I seen what come of that last game and I told the boys they'd have to do their crap shooting off the job. And so that week Regan taken his money home. At least I judge he taken it home, because the next night he had a good dinner with him and no black eye. And he kept his mind on his work.

VI

The week after that we had a hell of a funny accident. It was the only one I ever knowed that was funny, but it was, though it like to scared us to death.

It must of been about four-ten in the morning. We had the train laying right under a beam and was changing some messenger suspensions. Everything was dead and grounded in the section where we was. The nearest hot wire to us was the hot side of a air break down under the signal bridge about a hundred yards away.

Well, about four-ten we heard a ruckus down near the signal bridge and some of them stray dogs that hang out by the slaughterhouse acrost the yard begun to bark like hell. I could n't figure it for a minute and then I caught on all of a sudden.

'Get away from that wire, boys! Them dogs have chased a hobo up that signal bridge. If he fouls that break, it might throw something back this way!'

The boys throwed themselves down on the deck, and one or two that was up the ladder clumb up onto the beam and laid out on that where they'd be out of the way if a wire burnt through. I throwed the spotlight on the signal bridge, but it was so far I could n't see the hobo at all. If it had n't been the signal bridge I would n't of knowed what it was, cause a hobo don't go around carrying steel skates so he can get up a pole when dogs chase him. But on the signal bridge they was ladder steps all the way up from the ground, and a kid could of clumb it. They was hot wire all over that bridge, too — jumper loops offen the signal circuit, and feeder taps and short air breaks and any amount of other junk. It would of been a bum place for a lineman that knowed his stuff to be fooling around in the dark.

'They's fourteen thousand volts of juice all over that signal bridge, hobo! Stand still till I come down there with a light and run them dogs off, and I'll show you how to get down alive!'

He did n't answer, but them dogs barked worse than ever. Beckett he speaks up: —

'He thinks you're a railroad dick and if he answers he's jail bait.'

'He's hearse bait if he fools around that bridge. And this train's got to move out of here in three minutes. Renford, get that ladder down and then move the train back to the siding. And keep the men away from that wire. Beckett, you and Scarfe come with me and we'll see if we can get this tramp down before he kills himself!'

We run most of the way. I got no special use for hoboes, but they ain't no sense in letting a guy burn himself up just because he thinks you're the law and is scared to come down out of a death trap like that. But we was too late. We was still about thirty yards from the bridge when a breaker switch lets go like a load of dynamite. We could n't see the hobo in the flash and we did n't hear his body hit the ground, though we knowed the surge must of knocked it loose of the contact or the breaker would of blowed again. But the wind was blowing our way, and the first whiff that got to us after that breaker blowed settled it. You don't forget that smell.

Well, we got to the bridge and looked all around under it, but we could n't find no body. The dogs had run off when the breaker blowed. I put my light on the bridge, but I could n't see nothing up there, so I clumb up and looked at every lead on it. I found where the flash had been, all right. They was a broke bell in a set of flash-scarred insulators. But they was n't no sign of a body nowhere and we could n't figure that out. Fourteen

thousand'll tear a man up something awful if it hits him right, or again you got to look his body over close to find where the contact was. It's freakish stuff, but at that I never heard of it carrying no one off. And it was n't no kite blowed into that wire, neither. A kite don't smell like that.

I clumb down again and stood there talking to Scarfe about it when Beckett give out a laugh.

'There's your hobo!'

I looks where he's holding his light, and there was the head and shoulders of a cat. That was all they was left of it. The rest of it, I guess, was blowed all over the yard. All the fur was burnt off the part we seen. It was ugly, but it was better to look at than a dead hobo.

We all stood there and laughed at it. We'd been tensioned up tight, thinking it was a man.

'Them dogs run him up there,' says Scarfe, 'and somehow he slipped acrost them insulators. We'll never know how.'

'Who cares how?' asks Beckett. 'I don't, and I bet the cat don't, neither. He ain't never going to be hungry again, nor have to scratch around on rainy nights to get food, nor let them tabby cats worry him, neither. His troubles is over, quick and painless.'

Scarfe he give a start. He don't say nothing for a second, and then he says kind of low, like he was talking to himself: —

'Yeah. That's one cure for any trouble.'

It struck me odd, Scarfe being so serious about a stray old cat, but I did n't have time to think about it before the gang come up bringing a stretcher. They was n't serious. They laughed like hell when they seen how we was fooled. Beckett he says we ought to fill out a real accident report and send it to the head office — fill

it out like it was a lineman named 'A. Cat.'

'How would you fill in that part where it says "Remarks"?' asks Scarfe. He was n't so serious now the other guys had come up and was standing there laughing.

Beckett thought a minute. 'That would n't have nothing to do with it. Just fill that part in like you generally do it: "Remarks: None."'

So we threw what was left of the cat back in the bushes and went on back to the train.

VII

Pay day come again, and the night after it Regan come in without no dinner. He had a long scratch on the side of his face, too. When we got our first shot he put his belt on upside down and all the tools fell out around his feet. He would n't even of knowed it if Beckett had n't arced at him to pick 'em up and get conscious. Up on deck I watched him like a hawk, and I did n't have to watch long. We was tensioning, and the first thing Regan does is put a little set of four-inch blocks acrost a splice where he knowed damned well he was going to have a pulling load of about five thousand pounds. Scarfe seen him do it and tried to get them blocks off before I seen it. But when he seen I seen it, he just turns away and shakes his head.

'Regan, you go down to the shop car and help the shop-car boy make up them pull-off straps to-night.'

'Yes, sir.'

Scarfe taken me aside after Regan had gone.

'I'm right obliged to you for not just firing him right up here where everyone could hear it.'

'I hate it, Scarfe. I like that boy and I'd like to keep him. But you seen that last stunt yourself; I'll just have to

give him his time in the morning. It ain't fair to him nor to the others to keep him. It could only end one way.'

'Yeah,' says Scarfe. 'Only one way.'

He stood there for a while after that, keeping out of the way of the rest of the gang, and I did n't bother him. He thought a lot of Regan and he felt bad about it. I did, too. I guess I felt worse for Scarfe than I did for Regan hisself. But by and by Scarfe come out of it, and, if he was kind of quiet, he did put out a good night's work. Then about four o'clock he comes up to me.

'Jig, you going to make that change at the signal bridge?'

'I was going to, but I ain't sure now, Scarfe. I can't get power clearance under there for twenty minutes, and I'll only get a fifteen-minute shot then. If I could spare a couple of men to get everything rigged and ready in advance, I could make it. But I'm afraid I'll have to let it go till to-morrow night.'

'I'll rig it for you, Jig.'

'One man ain't enough, and that's all I can spare.'

'Let me take Regan. He's still on the pay roll.'

'It's too risky. Everything down there's still red hot.'

'He'll do all right with me, Jig. I know him, and I can take care of him and rig it right, too.'

'Well, I'd like to get that done to-night, Scarfe, but . . .'

'Jig, let me do it. Regan and me are buddies. I know he's done, but he and I seen each other through a lot of tough places and I'd like to see him through one more. This is likely his last job and I'd like to work with him one more time.'

'All right. Want a helper to carry your stuff?'

'No. I'd rather it was just him and

me. We ain't got so much stuff to carry.'

I walks down to the signal bridge with 'em and showed 'em what I wanted done. Regan he still seemed kind of dopey, though he looks at me and paid close attention when I was warning him about the hot wire. And he clumb all right.

I watched 'em till they'd got up onto the bridge and pulled their ladder up. And then I hollered to 'em to watch the hot stuff all the time, and I starts back over to the train to see if Beckett had the tensioning done. I was just wondering if I done right to trust Regan at all when I heard the breaker switch blow. . . .

As I run, all I could think of was if I'd fired Regan right off the deck in the first place Scarfe would be still alive. But when I got there Scarfe was still alive. He'd clumb down off the bridge and picked up Regan from where he fell and carried him over to the side of the track. When I come up he was just standing there looking at him.

I put my flashlight on Regan, and then I shut it off and taken off my overall jumper and throwed it over his face. I put my light on Scarfe, and then I taken it off him, too. He was all right. His overalls was singed and his eyebrows and lashes was burned off, but it was more than that made me take my light off him. It was something in his face. He did n't say nothing and neither did I. We could hear the other guys coming and see their lights bobbing as they run. And then Scarfe give a kind of a cry.

'I got to tell you, Jig. I got to tell you the truth . . .'

I cracks him hard acrost the face with my open hand.

'Buck up, Scarfe. They ain't nothing to tell. We both seen this poor guy trip and fall acrost that wire. Lots of accidents happen that way. "Remarks: None."'

He taken a long breath and kind of shook hisself. And then just before the other guys come up he says:—

'I guess you're right. Thanks, Jig.'

DELIGHTFUL PEOPLE¹

BY MARGARET CHANLER

I

THE Roman season was governed by the liturgical year: it did not begin till after Christmas (no dancing was countenanced in Advent), and it ended with Shrove Tuesday, Mardi Gras, when the masks of the Corso carried lighted tapers (*moccoletti*) that were constantly blown out by other masks and then re-lighted, only to be again extinguished, a symbol of our ephemeral earthly pleasures.

Then came Ash Wednesday with its *Memento, homo, quia pulvis es*, the reminder of the dust to which we must return; the Lenten sermons, the 'Stations' in the various churches. On its appointed day the church is hung with damask, and crystal chandeliers, holding innumerable wax candles, are all about the altar where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed. There is a sermon, music, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

We continued to see our friends, in a lower key, at afternoon teas, small dinners, and the usual weekly *ricevimenti*. As the soft Roman days lengthened to spring, *campagna* picnics were in order, expeditions to Ostia, to Castel Fusano, to mountain towns in the Abruzzi or in the Alban Hills, to Santa Maria in Galera, that strange deserted city in the plains; to Veii, the Etruscan stronghold; to all the legendary places of the Roman Campagna.

¹A previous chapter of Mrs. Winthrop Chanler's reminiscences, 'Roman Spring,' appeared in the July issue. — EDITOR

In Holy Week we always attended the Office of Tenebræ. I particularly liked to hear it at St. John Lateran. The lamentations of Jeremiah are sung to ancient melodies whose origin is lost in the many centuries through which they have been handed down. Perhaps they were Hebrew threnodies; they are the immemorial cry of human sorrow and desolation, answered by the beautiful responsory: *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum*. Then the singing of the Miserere in the gathering dusk when all the candles had been extinguished save the one which was hidden behind the altar, and the crowd knelt in silent recollection till the final *strepitus* (the banging of books and benches) broke the spell, and sent us out into the tender twilight of the Roman spring, back to the present realities of our little human lives.

My brother, Marion Crawford, and I often walked home together; our way lay by all the great Roman monuments — Constantine's Basilica, the Colosseum, the Forum, the Capitol; and the pageant of Roman history seemed to have a sharper outline than the happenings of our own existence. The great Past is not dead in Rome — rather does it at times make the Present seem shadowy and ephemeral; we become a part of the stream of life that has flowed for so many centuries past those same temples, arches of triumph, porticoes, and palaces.

Then came the enchanting Rome of early summer — all the foreigners gone, the air full of sound of fountains and scent of flowers; the streets deserted during the noon hours, coming to life in the cool of the evening; all the pleasant summer street life, leisurely and sentimental; little tables on the piazzas with ices and coffee, where the girls sat beside their mothers and exchanged shy amorous glances with young men they did not know, or well-chaperoned conversation with those who joined the family group.

The streets were full of love-making that floated in the air like pollen in a flower garden. Half the time the lovers had never exchanged a word. They might belong to very different classes, and know that they could never meet but in the long, long look, or perhaps in a dream. The young princess would sit demurely by her mother's side in the open carriage, for the afternoon *trot-tata*, but who could prevent the young violinist who played in the orchestra from standing at the corner where they were sure to pass and sending out his whole heart to her through his love-lit eyes? These flirtations went on in every class of life; Rome was alive with them as were other Italian cities. In most cases they went no further than these ardent glances.

A Roman lady met a Danish doctor at my house; he was an old friend of ours and was taking care of my husband. I was telling her who he was when she gave her pretty laugh and said, 'Oh, but I know him! He is an old street flirt of mine.' She was very beautiful; a famous serenade was written to her, set to music and sung all over Italy; Lenbach had painted her as a girl and called the picture 'A Roman Beauty.'

II

When I was about fourteen my mother took me one afternoon to see

the great Madame Helbig. I was working hard at my music and Madame Helbig's house was a centre of musical life. She was a Russian princess by birth — a gifted and unique figure. She had studied with Clara Schumann and later with Liszt, and was a good pianist and excellent musician. She married Professor Wolfgang Helbig, Director of the German School of Archæology in Rome. They lived on the Tarpeian Rock, in a roomy modern house built for the Archæological Institute by the German Government, near the Palazzo Caffarelli, which was the German Embassy.

Madame Helbig was a huge woman — six feet tall and very stout. I have seen her sit down to play at a concert and draw the grand piano up to her seat rather than adjust herself to its angle. She wore her hair cut to her neck and a straight shapeless gown of a dark heavy material which fell from her shoulders to her feet. She had great vitality and passionate artistic enthusiasm. She drew, she painted, she decorated her house, she embroidered, she was interested in everything.

I was frightened enough when she asked me to play to her and motioned me to the Erard piano, which she explained had belonged to Liszt and was full of lovely musical ghosts. I managed to get through a Bach gavotte and a Scarlatti scherzo without offending them too much, and she must have taken a fancy to me, for when we rose to take our leave she told me to come again; to come, in fact, every Thursday afternoon and make music with her, and these Thursday afternoons became for the next few years the great events of my life.

There was a second piano, a Pleyel upright, and we read four-hand music sometimes on one and more often on two pianos. We went through the whole available repertoire of four-hand music. Schumann was one of our

favorites; his symphonies and chamber music go well on the piano. Liszt's Symphonic Poems, the Preludes, the Dante Symphony, Mazeppa, the Christus Oratorio, the Tasso.

Madame Helbig read with great facility and was patient with my shortcomings. There is a delightful excitement perhaps not wholly musical about reading with a good musician. It partakes a little of the tense pleasure of a good run to hounds; you see a big obstacle ahead and you gallop as fast as you can, without losing control, over the good going, and finish panting, ecstatic, hardly knowing how it was done. If she was satisfied with me and said, 'Very good, my little Daisy,' my cup was full.

Sometimes there were others to make music; famous artists would turn up or young musicians seeking encouragement; and sometimes there was no music, but just conversation round the samovar. All sorts of interesting and amusing people, the literary and the artistic, the fashionable and the learned, ladies of the Court, ambassadors, travelers of distinction, that motley gathering which every season shapes itself into a new pattern in the kaleidoscope of Cosmopolis. The two noted historians, Mommsen and Gregorovius, met there one day; and Mommsen, willfully ignoring Gregorovius's fame, asked him, who had eight well-known volumes of Roman mediæval history to his credit, 'Have you also been in Rome before, Herr Gregorovius?'

Eleonora Duse was an intimate friend. I saw her there for the first time off the stage, infinitely captivating, and surprisingly cheerful and healthy-looking. She never used rouge behind the footlights, and seeing her delicate and rosy skin in broad daylight one understood why she did not wish to ruin it with grease paint, but to her audiences she always looked pale and a little tragic. I remember once the talk ran on money,

and Madame Helbig, who was not at all rich but never allowed herself to feel poor, exclaimed, 'Money, money, one must not think about it!'

'*Eh, cara mia,*' said Duse, 'one must have a great deal of it in order not to think about it!' *Per non pensarci bisogna averne assai.* Poor Duse. It was not for herself she needed so much money, but to satisfy the demands of her rapacious, implacable poet lover.

After the first great performance of Wagner's *Ring* at Bayreuth, which was also the opening of the *Festspielhaus* and the first of the Bayreuth summer festivals, Joseph Rubinstein came to Rome. He had been at the piano during all the rehearsals of the great tetralogy; had trained the choruses, and had made the first piano scores and piano reductions of the operas. He undertook to initiate us, some dozen lovers of music, into the glories of the great cycle; the meetings took place at Madame Helbig's.

It was a strange, exciting world for me to see and come in contact with, in the guise of friendly music lessons, and I saw it with beglamoured eyes. I always came away from those Thursday afternoons exhilarated, treading on air. Sometimes my brother Marion would come to fetch me and we would walk home together by way of the long, easy steps of the Capitol, pausing at the top between the great statues of the Dioscuri, on our right the steeper flight of the Aracoeli, where Gibbon sat and pondered on the Decline and Fall, with Rome at our feet in twinkling dusk, our heads in the clouds, feeling curiously elated. Was it Youth? Art? Rome? All three perhaps.

III

I think it was in the autumn of 1877 that Madame Helbig took me to congratulate Liszt on his sixty-sixth birthday. I had not met him before and felt

as though I were being taken into a supernatural presence. Pictures of him as an old man are familiar to all, but I never saw one that was not something of a caricature, a portrait of his warts; none gave the exalted distinction of his personality, the look of penetrating intelligence combined with kindly gayety. He wore a Roman collar and a long black coat of clerical cut. He received us with great cordiality in his shabby little furnished apartment, whither all Rome was flocking on the same errand, everyone glowing with the same enthusiastic homage.

When we left he whispered to Madame Helbig that he was going to give lessons to a group of young pianists and that she must be sure to come and bring the 'little one,' meaning me. I was not particularly little, but under Madame Helbig's huge protecting wing I seemed a very small chicken. This was almost too good to be true; to be admitted even as a listener to these famous classes was an un hoped-for privilege. Liszt in those days occupied with infinitely more prestige the position later held by Leschetizky. All young pianists vied for the honor of being his pupils.

Liszt was sincerely religious. It was often said he became an Abbé (that is, took the first orders, for he never was a Mass priest) so as to escape from marrying the Princess Caroline Sayn-Wittgenstein. Be this as it may, there was sincere piety in his spirit. There are passages throughout his work which bear witness to it. The Magnificat in the Dante Symphony, the Christus Oratorio with the beautiful chorus about the Magi, *Et invenerunt puerum*, show a kind of mystic contemplation.

There was no price on his teaching; he was a great prince or prophet of music, and literally gave, never sold, his lessons, to whom he chose. There never was anyone more generous in

recognizing young talent, in doing all he could to develop it, and in helping the obscure virtuoso to make his way to fame.

On the appointed day we found our way to the Sala Dante, Rome's only music hall. It was part of the big palace whose east wall supports the rocky background of the Fontana di Trevi and holds the niches of Bernini's allegorical figures.

When we arrived the great Abbé met us at the door and asked at once for *la petite*, who was completely hidden behind Madame Helbig's towering bulk. The class met in a smaller room not connected with the concert hall, a shabby unfurnished apartment that had been used as a storeroom after seeing better days, for it had traces of eighteenth-century decorations on its doors and window frames. It was dimly lighted by a few guttering candles stuck into bottles. We sat on rickety straw chairs, but the sordid accessories took nothing from the prestige of the occasion; rather they added to it a flavor of adventure. It was like seeing a great commander issuing orders from a wayside tavern or a baggage car.

Besides the four or five young pianists who formed the class there were perhaps half a dozen of us who had come to listen — Donna Laura Minghetti, Baroness Meyendorff, and one or two others. The pupils played what they had prepared and Liszt corrected, blamed, encouraged their work.

It was interesting to notice the varied degrees of tension that he brought to the different composers. When Chopin was being played, only the most delicate precision would satisfy him. The *rubatos* had to be done with exquisite restraint and only when Chopin had marked them, never *ad libitum*. Nothing was quite good enough to interpret such perfection. A student played one of Liszt's own rhapsodies; it had been practised conscientiously, but did not

satisfy the master. There were splashy arpeggios and rockets of rapidly ascending chromatic diminished sevenths. 'Why don't you play it this way?' asked Liszt, sitting at his second piano and playing the passage with more careless bravura. 'It was not written so in my copy,' objected the youth. '*Ja, das dürfen Sie nicht so genau nehmen*' (Oh, you need not take that so literally), answered the composer. He intended his rhapsodies to be played rhapsodically, with a certain character of improvisation.

One of these lessons, the most memorable, was given to a young man who had prepared Beethoven's *Sonate für das Hammerklavier*, an arduous work alike for listeners and for performer. The young man had worked hard and played all the notes in all their harshness. Liszt was not happy about the performance. He corrected and discussed; the soul of the matter had in no wise been reached. When it came to the divine *Adagio*, Liszt took the pupil by the shoulders, gently shoved him out of his seat, and sat down to play it himself, pouring out his soul to us in the dusk of that room, turning it into a space between stars with the distant splash of the Fountain of Trevi as bourdon to the heavenly melody. I do not think that movement can ever have been played better or moved any group of people so deeply before or since. It was the end of the lesson. Donna Laura and Madame Helbig had tears streaming down their faces. We had been in the Great Presence.

Liszt dismissed the pupils and offered to walk home with Madame Helbig and me. '*Je prends la petite sous le bras.*' *La petite* was rapt to the seventh heaven. He asked me to play to him, but at that time my wrist, from too much practising, had developed a bad sinew and so I could not, and on the whole I was not sorry. I wanted him to think I played better than I did.

IV

Here I should like to make a digression and speak the praises of delightful people. They are generally so much better than famous ones. There have been so many ignored by history and the biographical dictionary. Like the golden threads in a precious tapestry we catch a glimpse of them here and there, on the Emperor's cloak, on the warrior's helmet, on the girdle of a great dame, on the dagger of a page, a few bright stitches — and they disappear into the duller background. They do not make the picture or have any importance in the action represented, but they incomparably enhance its beauty and its worth. This is but a poor image. Charming people are the light and the joy of the world.

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best, and some we know only from what we have heard: Madame de Sévigné's Abbé *le tout bon*, W. B. Yeats's 'beautiful Mary Hines,' only a name in a shining mist, and girls like Clara Middleton in *The Egoist* and Natasha in *War and Peace* and so many others. Delightfulness was the essence of their being. They have not made history, but their presence in the world made causes worth fighting for, made life worth living, turned the valley of tears into a place of smiles and laughter. It is good to know that such people have always enriched the world with their presence, without trumpet blasts of fame, leaving no tangible masterpieces to testify to their worth. Their masterpiece was their life.

My Uncle Sam Ward, my mother's oldest brother, was one of these favored ones. His life had been varied and checkered; oldest son of a rich New York banker, well endowed and well connected, he had been sent abroad with an unlimited letter of credit after he graduated from Columbia Univer-

sity. We are not told whether he abused this paternal trustfulness. On his return he married Emily Astor, oldest daughter of William B. Astor, granddaughter of the original John Jacob. The marriage was happy while it lasted, but the young wife died in giving birth to a daughter, Margaret. The young widower grieved and then consoled himself by marrying a showy and fascinating Creole, the beautiful Medora Grimes. This was not at all to the taste of the staunchly respectable Astors, who had carefully selected their wives among the best families; and the grandparents took little 'Maddie,' who was not much younger than the youngest of their own large brood, and brought her up with the rest of their children. The marriage with Medora Grimes turned out badly; perhaps the Astors were right in their disapproval.

Sam Ward went West in the '49 gold rush. He had lost a great deal of money. The bankruptcy of his father's firm was attributed to him. He was not fortunate, or perhaps not skillful, in money matters; he lost three fortunes in the course of his life. But he never lost his zest for living and giving, and in California he found no gold, but much adventure. At one time he bought a canal boat and fitted it up as a hotel and restaurant, where food and drink were of the best.

There were legends about these years, romantic tales of which the family knew only whispered fragments; there were young women — one lived with him disguised as a boy; wild doings for those prim Victorian days — startling, considering the sober old New York background from which he sprang. One does not wonder the Astor family was shocked. Then he came East again without a fortune, but always living sumptuously. He went to Washington, where he made himself useful to Senators and Congressmen in bringing them together, always with

the help of excellent food and rare wine; he was everybody's friend and was proclaimed King of the Lobby. He was a real connoisseur of wines, and, to keep his palate delicate, he never drank spirits or seasoned his food with pepper or mustard. The only liqueur he approved was yellow Chartreuse, and he invented a drink called a 'Sam Ward' concocted with this and the peel of a lemon laid around the inside of a glass filled with cracked ice. He told me he was satisfied to have given his name to this as a claim to remembrance, pointing out that only a very few names were permanently associated with food and drink.

He had another passion which I should perhaps have mentioned first. He was not quite so successful in it as in the giving of little dinners, but poetry was very dear to his heart, and he wrote many verses which fluttered a little in the breeze of friendly intercourse and then took their way down the stream of forgetfulness.

V

In the late summer of 1883, Uncle Sam joined us in Sant Agnello di Sorrento at the Cocumella, an old-fashioned hotel established in what had once been a monastery. There were spacious terraces trellised with grapevine and paved with colored tiles; there was a flagged court with an old well-head in the middle of it, and a domed chapel decorated with pale green and blue tiles and a few ecstatic stucco saints. Here it was always cool and quiet, and Monsignor Maresca, the beautiful saintly old Bishop of Sorrento, used to come and say Mass there every morning.

We were surrounded on every side by orange and lemon gardens ever green and fragrant, and beyond them we could see from our terrace the Gulf of Naples and Vesuvius. The Piano

(Plateau) di Sorrento lies about two hundred feet above sea level, stretches its fruitful acres from the mountains to the sea, ending abruptly in sheer brown cliffs that go straight down to the water.

Here and there along this unapproachable coast there are little narrow beaches, often only just wide enough to allow the fisher folk to draw up their boats and to dry and mend their nets as in Homeric or Biblical days. These are called *marine*, and each village has its own *marina* with a steep stony descent from the upper to the lower town, impracticable for any kind of vehicle, sometimes even for donkeys. These little places exist on all the rocky shores of the Mediterranean, in Italy, Greece, and the Ægean islands. Where the coast shapes itself into a harbor the village grows into a town or a great city, sending its ships out to the seven seas, but the beach alone can support no more than a small fishing village, humble and poor through the centuries.

The Cocumella *calata*, or descent to the sea, was cut and hollowed out of the living rock, the brown, volcanic tufa; parts of it were dark steep corridors. Halfway down there was a landing with a big vaulted chamber open to the sea. It commanded the bluest view in the world — Vesuvius and the sky and water, blue and bluer and bluest — and was cool in the hottest weather.

This Marion had taken as his workroom, and here he spent his mornings writing in a cave like Saint Jerome, minus the lion and the cardinal's hat, but, like Saint Jerome, attended and adored by a little circle of fond ladies. Just then the circle was formed by his family.

Mr. Isaacs had come out the preceding year, had obtained immediate and world-wide success, and the publishers were clamoring for more copy. As *Mr.*

Isaacs was the first book he had ever written or thought of writing, there was no unpublished manuscript to give them, and he went to work on his second novel, *Dr. Claudius*, followed by *To Leeward* and many others.

He wrote very fast, sometimes as much as a chapter a day, covering sheet after sheet of foolscap with his neat scholarly characters; never a blot or an erasure. He had none of the tormenting doubt of self-criticism. Working hard and conscientiously, he had confidence in his work and saw no reason to think that by doing it over he might do it better. This gave his pages a certain freshness. His books were extremely successful — to this the publishers' checks bore witness.

He cared little for society and was at his most delightful best in the intimacy of the home circle — a shining, joyful creature in those days when we would come down the *calata* toward the end of the morning to carry him off for the noon swim.

VI

No bathing has ever seemed half so enchanting as that in Sorrento, in the cool tideless rock-bound waters, very deep and clear and buoyant, of an indescribable blue that grows more vivid the deeper one plunges. Sorrento faces north, so that we were in the shadow of the high cliffs during the midday bathing hour.

Marion's boat, a lateen-sailed *felucca* with four sailors, was another of our joys. It happened sometimes that instead of two or three hours it would take eight or ten to reach our destination. An evening sail often prolonged itself to an all-night expedition and we saw the moonlight turn gray before the rose of dawn, and 'the baths of all the western stars' before we got to bed. And many a lovely sail we took on these sapphire waters. When the wind gave out, as it often did, the sailors

rowed with their big sweeps. We made many expeditions to neighboring islands and places along the shore — to Capri, to Salerno, to Amalfi, and to the Isles of the Sirens.

One day — it was my birthday — Marion prepared a special celebration. We were taken for a sail in the morning and after rounding several jutting headlands we landed in a beautiful great emerald grotto. On the little beach at the back of the cave we found a picnic spread — just such a picnic as Calypso might have arranged. We sat on the sand eating a delicious rustic meal of macaroni just cooked by the sailors, fresh cheese and fruit, bread and wine, while we watched the green waters rippling at our feet and casting reflections up into the rocky vault which made it all look a translucent jade. It is as fantastically green as the famous Capri Grotto is blue — not nearly so large, but easier of access.

At the Punta di Scutari (one of the many of that name that dot the Mediterranean shore) the swimming was superlatively good. There was a secluded ledge of rock which served as dressing room for the girls; the boys undressed in the boat. There were high overhanging cliffs and the water was very deep and dark blue-green. You could see fishes swimming far beneath the surface, but the bottom you could not see, even with the sun striking the water. There we disported ourselves like young porpoises, diving off the rocks, playing ball, dancing quadrilles. During one of these we terrified an American cousin whom we had invited to join us on his assuring us he knew how to swim. We were doing the figure in which one cavalier takes two ladies, one by each hand, and advances and retreats before the single cavalier, finally joining him, forming a circle, and then separating into two couples. It took very vigorous swimming, and his two ladies dragged him so hard

through the water that they did not notice that his mouth and nose were submerged. He was sure we nearly drowned him.

Sometimes we went there in the late afternoon and sometimes even by moonlight. It was delightful to see the sunset from the water; the sun seemed very near when it dipped into the sea and disappeared in it a few hundred yards away. But the moonlight swimming was uncanny — the water was too black, we looked too white, and the sea seemed full of intangible, terrifying presences.

VII

Uncle Sam was a welcome addition to the family circle. Everyone loved him. He shared our life on land and water and brought with him a breath of the great world. We made expeditions with him to Capri, to Pompeii, to Amalfi and Pæstum. He was untiring in his enthusiasm to see sights; made Marion go up Vesuvius with him and spent long hours in the Naples Museum. Early in the autumn we all went back to Rome and he stayed on with us there, visiting museums and churches, meeting our friends and casting on all the kindly radiance which drew everyone to him. We lived very simply at the Palazzo Altemps, my mother's fortune having been lost by a speculating cousin, and the dear Sybarite found it hard, I dare say, to get used to the *vino dei Castelli* which was served at our table, a rather sour little Roman wine.

One evening we had asked a few friends to meet him, Monseigneur Puyol¹ among others. My father had a few bottles of rare old French wines saved from the wreck of our Odescalchi

¹ He had been chaplain to the Empress Eugénie and was with her through the days of the Commune. He was at this time head of the French College of San Luigi dei Francesi. — AUTHOR

days. Some of this was served. I shall never forget the look of sudden rapture as Uncle Sam lifted his glass to his mouth and the delicate bouquet struck his unexpectant nostrils. 'Château Lafitte '67,' he murmured, as in prayer. Giuseppe, the old butler, had not announced it and the good uncle had no reason to expect anything but the usual table wine. I hardly think nose and palate can be more delicately sensitive than that — to name the Château and the vintage at a whiff.

That spring he went to join his devoted friends, Lord and Lady Rosebery, in Malta on their way back from India, and returned to us early in April. The journey had tired him and he had caught a cold that turned to bronchitis; other symptoms aggravated his condition, which was obviously serious. He lay in his bed with Omar Khayyám on the counterpane and Horace's Odes under his pillow. One night, which we all feared would be the last, he was very weak and could hardly make himself understood; I was with him and he evidently wanted something. I leaned over his pillow to catch the mumbled whispers; he wanted me to read 'Come into the Garden, Maud' aloud to him. His soul was young to the last.

He did not die that night, but rallied a little, and it was decided he should be taken to a better climate. Marion, his nurse, Sœur Marius, and I went with

him to Pegli — on the Italian Riviera. He bore the journey well enough, but in a few days there was a turn for the worse, and on the nineteenth of May it was all over. Two hours before his death he dictated a letter to Lord Rosebery, his faithful 'Sycophant.' Marion and I were heartbroken — we had lost our best friend.

Uncle Sam was a very high Mason, and Marion feared the local Masons might turn out to do him honor. The Masons in Italy are notoriously radical and anticlerical (Mussolini has seen fit to suppress them — if such a thing be possible). Marion thought it best to have a very quiet funeral the next day and bury the dear uncle in the little Pegli cemetery. There he lies on a sheltered hillside, under a marble tombstone ordered for him by Marion and Lord Rosebery, overgrown with ivy and climbing roses — just such a spot as his favorite Omar might have chosen for his final resting place. (Uncle Sam liked to call himself Omar's successor.)

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again —
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;

How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden — and for *one* in vain!

And when like her, oh Sáki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One — turn down an empty Glass!

We returned to Rome with heavy hearts.

(To be concluded)

'TRY YOUR HAP AGAINST THE IRISHMEN'

BY MURIEL SPERRY

To Ireland will you lead a band of men,
Collected choicely, from each county some,
And try your hap against the Irishmen?

— II Henry VI

I

AFTER the domestication of the North and South Poles, and when enterprising world cruisers had made of Bali a residential suburb for Manhattan malcontents, it seemed as though no further world remained to be exploited. But there were still secrets to be revealed, and to the *haute bourgeoisie* of America belongs one of the greatest and most fruitful discoveries of the past decade — that of Ireland, up to that time known only as the semifabulous home of America's grooms, nurses, and cooks. This discovery has been amusing to watch — the snob's progress, as it were; though there is perceptible now a sort of decline in the social scale.

When I first discovered America, — all Irish people being then a mixture of the Lily of Killarney, the Shaughraun, and the Arrah-na-Pogue, and expected to behave accordingly, — I was treated with a mixture of pity and wonder as one who seemed civilized enough, but whose antecedents must be odd, to put it mildly. Indeed, I remember being asked if I had been married in native costume or if I had had a real wedding dress. After a while I ceased to try to explain and even felt a kind of pity for the hostesses who had to temper the shock of introducing me to their friends by saying that, though I came from

Ireland, I did have English connections, and that, though I liked claret and confessed to a weakness for John Jameson and Son, I was not drunken, nor a winebibber. These were merely my funny Irish ways.

In spite of all this, I did muster up courage enough to invite one very good friend to visit my home in Ireland, and with much tact and real good feeling she begged me to explain to my people that, though she was used to a civilized life, she liked adventure and would gladly overlook such trifles as worn-out dinner napkins and tattered sheets, and would herself provide all the Keating's Powder necessary for sweet repose and pleasant dreams. But all that is long ago and far away; and as America grew more sophisticated she became more huntin'-shootin'-and-fishin'-minded, and Ireland swam into her ken as a spot where beautiful old places were to be had, with a chance of getting in with the neighboring 'high ginthry,' up to that time as close a corporation as there was in Europe. Why, even Derby winners were bred there, a run with the Meath or the Galway Blazers was not to be despised, the slaying was sporting, and the fish accommodating and uncommon good.

This horsy, tweedy, mixed-bag phase

was comparatively innocuous and bearable in comparison with the phase which succeeded it, when the intelligentsia came into its own, when the Irish Players introduced the folk drama and the dialect, and your friends greeted you with 'avick' and 'alanna' and 'God save all here,' and the 'Native' was discovered and found amusing — as long, of course, as he stuck to his native heath and was not too unruly in his political aspirations, or too aggressive in his demands for self-expression.

The Irishman is always referred to as a 'native,' you will remark, as though he were a rather strange but wholly delightful kind of savage. No one dreams of calling the English, Germans, or French 'natives,' that term being reserved in a tone of kindly patronage for a people who, by the very accident of geographical position, have had to be far less insular than their more fortunately placed neighbors.

II

And now, of course, it is quite the 'done' thing to include Ireland in your itinerary, when you go abroad. You must spend at least a part of your time touring the 'romantic little isle,' absorbing its quaint culture, its 'marvelous local color,' and enjoying the delicious humor and the 'semifeudal courtesy' of its people. Why, even art historians and scientists have now joined the throng, and spend a great deal of their money and quite a lot of their time reinterpreting art forms and primitive culture and performing miracles of efficiency in fields which the Irish have not had the money or the opportunity to exploit. When these travelers return and tell me their adventures (some of them have even heard the Banshee — a privilege that is granted to very few Irish), and are ecstatic over their encounters with the

'rugged rough-headed' natives, it is all too terribly 'Little Jack Horner,' and I, as an Irishwoman, do not know whether to resent their condescension or to be amazed at their lack of perception. But I am generally consoled by the thought that the Irish know their onions as well to-day as in the days when they had to keep England guessing, and that probably, in their dealings with American visitors, transient or semipermanent, they get quite as good as they give.

Of all the enthusiasts, however, who have made life a burden, the worst are those Americans who have been bitten with the bug of going native in Ireland and living with nature in the raw in the 'glens and back hills.' There they would have you think of them as very close to the Great Mother, 'sitting looking from a door and seeing nothing but the mists rolling down the bog and the mists again and they rolling up the bog, and hearing nothing but the wind crying out, and the streams roaring with the rain' — a state of affairs which is quite as unpleasant as it sounds and which no Irishman ever really enjoys.

Och! but I'm weary of mist and dark,
And roads where there's never a house nor bush,
And tired I am of bog and road,
And the crying wind and the lonesome hush!

And I am praying to God on high,
And I am praying Him night and day,
For a little house — a house of my own —
Out of the wind's and the rain's way.

That is the way the 'native' feels about it and I have no doubt he would be glad to let the sentimental foreigners have all there is of it. They will make good copy on their frequent returns from the wilds, extolling the poetry of those very conditions which the Irish are fast trying to do away with. There are times when one wonders how the aboriginal inhabitants bore as patiently as they did with the dis-

coverers of these United States, especially if those discoverers were in any way like their modern counterparts.

I think of one family of Americans who decided to go back to nature and get all the kick possible out of that experience. So to the hills near Dublin they went and wallowed in primitive conditions. They decided to share their adventures with the less fortunate, and soon there appeared glowing accounts of life in the ‘wee whitewashed thatched cabin’ at the end of a long ‘boreen,’ where the four-footed beasties mooed a morning welcome through the open windows — quite unlike any Irish cows I have ever known.

There our pioneers communed with Nature in the long Celtic Twilight, almost seeing their souls sprout amid the silence of the everlasting hills. Quite too beautiful, if one had not happened to know that the wee thatched cabin was a two-storied stone cottage with a slate roof, and that the boreen was the perfectly good main road to Dublin down which Jacob’s Biscuit vans and Guinness’s Stout lorries thunder daily, to say nothing of noisy tourists in motor car or char-à-bancs on *their* way to the wilds. But it was all grand grist for the mill of American journalism, and many a stay-at-home read it entranced, and thrilled vicariously to these flights from reality and the sentimental symbolism of the Celtic Twilight as interpreted by U. S. A.

Another family occurs to mind who sought the Great Realities in the Wicklow hills for a time, doing the stunt in the grand manner. There we went one brilliant summer day a few years ago for tea and enlightenment. Our hostess met us barefoot, complete with shawl and short homespun skirt. Outside the cottage — the real thing this time, thatched and whitewashed

— we had our tea. The dogs, a motley crew from neighboring cottages, shared the rugs on which we sat. The fleas leapt from the dogs to the rugs, and from the rugs into our teacups and on to the very excellent homemade bread. When we choked slightly and evinced no further interest in tea, our hostess gazed reproachfully at us and, having told us to turn our minds from minor discomforts to the scene before us, calmly went on with her own tea and fleas.

True, the setting was perfect. Larks were singing, the hills swam in a blue haze, the green of the larches was at its tenderest. The fields were gay with the bog orchis and the flag, and against the low gray stone walls there shot up the abrupt beauty of the foxglove. And yet and yet, the Irishwoman does like her tea and does not like fleas, and, being above all a realist, she feels definitely irritated when told to rise above minor discomforts and set her mind on higher things than food.

Fortunately for the future of Irish life and letters, the voices of these synthetic Granuailes go unheard in the land. Indeed, the native-born — and among them are many authors and artists — who have made their homes in the ‘wilds’ of Wicklow and Dublin show a nice appreciation of the good things of life. Their gardens are charming, as is the way of Irish gardens, their houses boast some of the amenities of civilization — plumbing is not enough, to be sure, but it goes a long way. And, since even in Ireland nowadays one has to get about, they prefer the motor to the ass cart as a means of transportation. Nor do a slight sophistication and a moderate interest in the pleasant things of life appear to diminish intellectual and artistic activities, for seldom has Ireland’s literary output been so rich and so vigorous as it is to-day.

III

It is curious, then, that in a land as intensely self-conscious as Ireland is become, such a spirit of patronage and exploitation on the part of foreigners should have been endured so patiently and for so long. As a matter of fact, it must be confessed that the Irish are themselves partly to blame for it. Indeed, there are times when one suspects them of fostering it. Centuries of dealing with a conqueror who consistently adopts the holier-than-thou or the richer-than-thou or the more-successful-than-thou attitude must develop in the conquered a certain defense mechanism, so that your Irishman is very often as much what he knows you want him to be as what he is. And with perfect sincerity, too, for it is difficult to have to apologize for yourself through the ages and yet remain completely yourself. Why not boast the 'two soul-sides' if you can?

Interestingly enough, this particular national ability was very clear to Keats even in his short dealings with the 'native.' In Miss Lowell's life of the poet there is quoted a letter from Keats to his brother Tom, in which he describes his travels in Scotland and Ireland and compares the differing traits of the two peoples, with, as might be expected, a definite bias in favor of the Scotch. Their minds seemed to him tidier and less tortuous in their workings than those of the Irish, who are 'remote' and 'puzzling.' You can seldom wring a commitment on any subject from the Scotchman, he writes, but you can come 'in nigher neighborhood' to him than to the Irishman, who commits himself in so many ways at once that your head swims. The Irishman, of course, is a bore with his laughter and his repartee, and the Scotch never laugh! In one short trenchant observation, however, Keats

puts his finger on the spot when he says that both Scotch and Irish know the reputation in which they are held in England and behave accordingly to Englishmen.

As Miss Lowell remarks, Keats's attitude is here that of the Englishman 'dazed' and 'puzzled' by what he met — 'his opinions bear the stamp of their origin for all to see.' He speaks as one who went out to find what he found. But in that one sentence, 'They are both sensible of the character they hold in England and act accordingly to Englishmen,' you have, I think, a clue to the Irishman's willingness to provide copy to all and sundry; and if he piles on the colors a bit, who can blame him for giving free rein to his innate sense of drama? Watch a group of Irish together, notice their rapid gestures, the quick changes of mood, listen to the excited voices — their very inflections betray their incorrigible theatricality. And so, when some unsuspecting foreigner comes along, all primed with theories from 'John Bull's Other Island' and all agog for local color, the simple 'native' gives him good measure, pressed down, running over, and acts his part so well that he convinces even himself; but acting it is.

The Irish appreciate — none better — American money; they like being put on the map in more ways than one; they have a weakness for a bit of good *réclame*; but they are not the simple unsophisticated naturals that so many of their 'fans' would have them be. When all is said and done, Sinn Féin is not the slogan of a race of happy-go-lucky playboys; and the last twenty years of Irish history have shown us a race of hard-headed realists with a talent for getting the better of their adversaries and a political sophistication it would be hard to rival.

To this instinct for the theatrical

there is added an almost uncanny perceptiveness in the Irish make-up. The average beggar in the street can tell by the look of you what particular type of blarney you will fall for; the tramp you meet on the country road knows in a glance what you come from and what kind of history you will most delight in.

There was current in Dublin, some years ago, the story of a local newspaper boy who had the reputation of selling more newspapers (and they to be a day old) than any of his rivals in the field. A clubman, with archaeological proclivities, determined to find out the secret of this strange success. After a long period devoted to research, he found that the boy's methods were very simple — as simple as they were effective. When the lad saw a prospective buyer come in sight, he sized him up rapidly as a Protestant or a Catholic. If the former, he would shout, 'Diabolical outrage! Young Protestant girl violated by Catholic priest!' If the latter, he would yell, 'Diabolical outrage! Young Catholic girl violated by Protestant bishop!' And the fish would bite. It is said that he seldom missed his guess.

I cannot vouch for the truth of this story; it was told me by the clubman in question and he was Irish; but, even if apocryphal, it does serve as a clue to the traits which 'dazed' and 'puzzled' Keats.

IV

The reason for this extraordinary quickness of perception is to be found, I think, in the fact that the Irish are a bilingual people, for Irish has always been spoken in some part of the country, and a race which is bilingual is usually much more nimble-witted than a people who speak but one language. Many traces of the Irish still remain in the spoken English, which is, therefore,

much less regulated by convention and consequently much more picturesque than the same language across the Channel.

There is a strange mixture of realistic and of what one might call 'highfalutin' speech in Ireland, but a great deal of the so-called 'poetic' language is straight translation from the Irish and in reality as prosaic as the stolid talk of the Maine farmer. So the 'ears polite' of the tourist are just as likely to be shocked by the plain unvarnished realism of Irish talk as to be soothed by its sweet sounds; he will hear 'I'll give him a lick over the gob with the gut-board' as often as he will thrill to 'I'll lave me hands in the clear stream.'

An artist who lived in Achill for many years is said to have observed that Synge's plays were merely a literal reproduction of the talk among the Galway and Mayo islanders, and no doubt he knows whereof he speaks. But the language of Sean O'Casey is quite as true to Irish life as that of Synge; and Joxer Daly and the 'Paycock' are no whit less characteristically Irish than Peggymike and Christy Mahon.

Far too much has been written and said about the quaintness and colorfulness of the Irish language and the romance and mystery of Ireland itself. To lay undue emphasis upon such aspects is to hamper the free literary and artistic development of a people and fosters a certain hypocritical spirit. Years of political change apparently have failed to make clear to the sentimental foreigner (who likes his Irish served with ice and soda water) the tremendously strong strain of cynicism and realism in the national character, which is bound to predominate finally; and even now the rising generation of poets, dramatists, and artists are casting off the musty conventions of the past. Young Ireland, whose

middle name is sophistication, does not want to be suckled in a creed outworn, and the voice of Young Ireland is insistent and not to be denied. The new generation is out for blood, and the upholders of a stale tradition who are trying to prop the ruins of 'John Bull's Other Island' may look to themselves.

Nothing is more significant in recent years than the work of the Gate Theatre — for, as was to be expected, the voice of Young Ireland is the theatre. It has forged ahead from very small beginnings until to-day its directors have been asked to America to help produce plays this summer, and the work of such young men as E. W. Tocher is too well known to those whose concern is the theatre to need mention here. These young people are fast breaking away from the old forms of the traditional folk play, and, by adapting to their own use all the best of the experiments of America and Eu-

rope in the field of drama, are well on the way to creating a thoroughly characteristic national theatre whose voice is destined to go out into all lands.

But bookings are still being made for the *Sentimental Journey*! Better go while the going is good, for the accommodations are getting a bit outmoded, and your fellow passengers will smack of Brooklyn Heights rather than Park Avenue. If you hurry you may get a fleeting glimpse of the last 'little Irish colleen in her ould plaid shawl,' whatever that may be, as she trips in silk stockings and smart shoes (Irish manufacture) Dublinwards. You may even succeed in reaching America's Mecca — 'the wild and windy corner of far-distant hills.' If you do, you will see against the sky line of those hills, at regular intervals, the poles of the Shannon Electric Power Company, which has forever routed the shadows of the Celtic Twilight.

THESE COILS OF DEBT

BY ARTHUR POUND

I

IN the old days when the securities trade flourished, the financial district in lower New York welcomed notables with showers of ticker tape. From skyscraper windows streamed wind-blown arcs of thin white paper which, like the booming values of the period, were apparently without end. Some of these graceful ribbons reached the shoulders of paraders; more fell in mazy loops on the black pavement. The habit grew to be a rite and then a nuisance, for the whitewings had to clean the thoroughfare after the captains and the kings had departed. These celebrations occurred so often and entailed such great expense that entertaining became something of an item in the budget of the city, which eventually had to cut the wages of street cleaners in order to remain solvent.

Ticker tape will bear a good deal of watching, not only by investors and speculators, but also by statesmen, for the symbols and figures which it carries as it clicks through the machine represent debts in such staggering sums that rapid changes not only ruin some citizens, but may even do grave injury to a Republic dependent on income taxes. A modernist Laocoön grouping would show Uncle Sam in between his two strong sons, Industry and Agriculture, all three enmeshed in ticker tape and fighting against its coils. When debt grows beyond power to lift and carry, it becomes deadly alike to men and to

political systems. Absolute monarchy taxed itself out of existence in France, and since the World War representative democracy has done likewise in the growing company of Fascist states. Democracy is especially vulnerable because it gives greater leeway to debt making than other political dispensations, and a nation like ours, whose values shift with hair-trigger speed, takes a good deal more managing than one that marches to a slower tempo.

The figures passing through the tickers are those at which debts are being bought and sold from minute to minute, with the aid, more or less constant, of borrowed money. When markets are free from pool rigging, the figures register the interested public's temporary and fluctuating opinion of the value of a certain piece of debt, after due allowance has been made for everything the corporate or institutional debtor owes and owns, and its prospect of collecting what is coming to it and disposing of its merchandise or services.

In flush times what it owes will be almost disregarded and what it owns will be regarded too highly, with a complete reversal of attitude in bad times. Mass emotions are ever present; the ballyhoo of optimism and the numb despair of pessimism overcome the mathematics of cold financial statements. Those profit who buy debts when the public is most eager to sell them and sell debts

when the public is most eager to buy them.

This day-to-day trade in debts is so well organized that it is easier to buy shares in paper contracts than it is to buy sand or sugar, and yet in some cases the complications are so many that only a few experts who make the finances of a given corporation their life study can know the whole truth about situations of a single great debtor. When the debtor is a government, the problem is even more baffling, since its whole political and social system is then part of the picture.

I once owned some stock in an English company whose shares were bought and sold daily on the New York Stock Exchange although it did only a tiny fraction of its business in this country. It had 'stances' of one sort or another in about a dozen different countries; in some of them it manufactured goods; in others it enjoyed concessions and patent monopolies. It was vulnerable in many directions, since to the ordinary risks of management over dispersed properties were added those of nationalist politics and international exchanges. To assay accurately its chances of profit would have required omniscience rather than mortal wisdom. This is an extreme case of modern commercial complexity, but some domestic holding companies are jumbled enough to defy analysis by any but super-minds. Owen D. Young once confessed that he was stumped by the Insull entanglements.

II

A society which combines private property with lightning celerity in communications and extreme legal acumen in reducing property to share-paper contracts becomes exposed to all the rigors of the hard truth that debt is the other side of investment. This is

what frustrates the present good intention to reduce debt burden without discouraging saving. There is no way of investing money except by putting some person or group or institution in debt to you, either for so many dollars at a fixed rate of return or for a certain share of the profits of the enterprise in which you have invested. Property owes its owner an income in this sense, that it will not long be cared for unless it returns its owner an income, either in money or in use. When the owner becomes convinced that all hope of income from that source has departed he forgets worthless shares, tosses his bonds to a salvaging committee, surrenders title to his mortgagee, or, in the case of marginal land unmortgaged, lets it return to the state for taxes. At least that was the position down to the time the government, under pressure from groups of embarrassed debtors, took to easing their lot by pledging its own credit in their interest.

Of course not all property is held for profit; some is held through pride and affection, returning merely psychological boons, but the amount of such property is relatively small and shrinking under the present pressure of taxation. Like other graces of life, possession of this sort is precarious, and exists by sufferance only. One cannot own antiques, for instance, unless he has income available for their support. In general, property must pay its way, which means that at the very least it must earn reasonable management fees and interest on investment. Otherwise, why bother with it?

Our forefathers grasped this common-sense truth firmly, because they also had a firm grasp of their properties. Their chief holdings were personal and entire; their debt relations simple. They owned mostly goods, buildings, and land; such shares as they possessed were in local enterprises, in the village

bank or mill, in the railroad which ran through their town or on which they shipped produce.

But for more than a century the trend has been from direct ownership to share ownership, from tangibles to intangibles, from goods to equities, from things in hand to papers in a strong box. Of your debtors you came increasingly to have little or no personal knowledge. During this time the range of the human will increased through improved communications and the control of share property drew farther and farther away from the small investor. The village bank joined a chain of banks administered from a distance; the mill went into a merger, and the local railroad became part of a mighty system.

One by one all the important economic functions of our society — except agriculture, which for various reasons could not travel fast enough to hit the new pace — slid toward and into big business units, there to rest upon the basis of paper contracts rigidly dependent upon government operating through courts, legislatures, and the police power. To make debts vendible in small packages at will or whim, a trade developed of such proportions that its exchanges seemed at one time to be the very foundation of our social life, and few heeded the danger of letting a nation's well-being depend on something which quivered from day to day and from minute to minute, like a jelly.

There came a time when those who held the debts of others lost confidence in their investments, many of which were only marginal and hence doubly vulnerable. The holders even lost confidence, for a brief period, in the government's ability to enforce debt collection. America was like a muddy pond in which a bewildered throng floundered, each pulling the other under as Tom tried to get from Dick

the wherewithal to pay Harry. Dick was out of work, Tom in arrears on his mortgage, and Harry was carrying the remnant of his bank account in his wife's name. The situation had passed the point where the rescuer on the shore could merely thrust out a plank and save a few victims in the hope that they would turn to and rescue others. Mr. Hoover tried that, with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. No; the rescuer had to use a more inclusive method.

What Roosevelt did was to tell everyone to keep quiet and draw a few deep breaths, while the government shook itself into shape to do something tangible for them. The flounders needed money and credit and jobs more than they needed good advice, and to get these essentials to them the government itself had to plunge into the debt pond, swallow a good deal of water, and lay itself open to some of the same risks which had ruined its beneficiaries.

To the old uncertainties marking our paper-debt economy are added others. The dollar having been watered once, will there be no more trips to the well? The Treasury gained billions by that move at the expense of some of its citizens and used part of it for the relief of other citizens. It is also borrowing heavily, on no better warrant than an optimistic forecast that the future will be able and willing to pay the bill. Deficit is still with us; unemployment gives way slowly; public relief remains a huge charge. The sovereign giant, the Federal Union, may continue invulnerable, since it has a first lien on all the earnings and property of its subjects under the income-tax laws, but, largely as a result of going into debt to save individuals and corporations from sinking under their burdens, has moved a long way toward state capitalism, bureaucracy, and denial of commercial freedom.

III

Capitalism, as it stands, is an accumulation rather than a system; if it were really a system, it would hardly tear itself apart so recklessly and regularly in the debt spasms which mark the extremes of business cycles. To capitalism, new debts are a necessity; the whole debt structure totters when new debts cannot be contracted; to save basic credit, government had to become a lender when private lenders refused to furnish enough capital to keep labor employed. All capitalist countries face this difficulty sooner or later, and usually meet it as America did, by government lending. But if new debts are a necessity, old debts are equally a menace to capitalism. Periodically there comes a time when many of them must be canceled unless government — *deus ex machina*! — comes to the rescue.

The rôle of credit is decisive in modern social life; easy credit creates jobs and commodities which tight credit changes into lay-offs and surpluses. Since the state must act to protect life itself in these crises, and since it must pay when others cannot, it is under bond to control credit for the sake of enhancing social stability. In the modern world this amounts to a mandate of sovereignty. The Federal Reserve System was created to do this very thing, but proved unequal to the task.

Good management of our huge, crisscrossed debts over a long period is impossible unless a government acts firmly and responsibly with regard to credits, looks as far ahead as human knowledge can penetrate, and plans for future balance and stability. This duty has been forced upon it by the sweep of events, legal, political, social, and scientific, since the passage of the first general incorporation act. The longer business, to use the word de-

scribing the old go-as-you-please world of trade, hesitates in accepting this conclusion, the worse bargain it will make in the end.

Whoever resents government interference in business — and I am one of that large company by training and habit — should ponder well this dilemma.

On the one hand, since property has been so generally subdivided and reduced to contract, owners are unable themselves to protect their scattered and piecemeal holdings, and only a strong government can do it for them. Simple policing and formal justice no longer serve to do this. For instance, strikes, more costly to stockholders than bandit raids and incendiary fires, require prevention through machinery set up in advance for the settlement of disputes.

On the other hand, a government running a deficit and urgently in need of funds must look sharply, not only for new henroosts to rob, as Lloyd George put it, but also to the regularity with which income eggs are laid in those roosts. The producers may have more fun foraging for themselves; but what about steady output? Suppose they find the loco weed and start running wild again; suppose they overdo egg laying for a while and then go into another three-year moulting spell.

The government, to maintain its solvency under the present and growing debt burden, is under stern compulsion to keep its ambitious subjects from tearing values to bits in another depression following too rabid speculation and profit seeking. The state's first interest must ever be security; and economic recovery without steadying reform invites future disaster.

Under the circumstances, increasing government control of business is inevitable. Furthermore, to make control effective, government patrol is

certain to be more rigid than it ever has been. These issues can be considered settled; there is no use fighting about them any more. The issue of the future will be neither government control nor government patrol, but rather how far government will undertake to initiate, finance, push through, and operate projects that have hitherto been left for private initiative.

IV

Banking, simply because government control of money is an ancient prerogative of the Federal Union, is farther along this road than any other branch of American business. Government performed a life-or-death service for bankers when it shut their doors instead of leaving them to endure the runs of their depositors to the bitter end. The immediate beneficiaries of that decisive action were directors and stockholders subject to assessments in favor of depositors in case of closure. Even the owners of banks which did not reopen received a respite, since values rose before they had to pay. This service to banks and bankers exceeds in timeliness and importance the aids since given to other business interests, but no objection to it is heard, for the sufficient reason that such aid also assisted depositors and the public, and the government itself already had so large a stake in the banking business that rescuing banks was almost like saving itself.

Since that crisis the government has moved farther into banking in most of its important aspects. It is a heavy lender, borrower, and guarantor. It is also a regulator, liquidator, examiner, and adviser of all the banks in the Federal Reserve System, which represents three quarters of the nation's banking power. All these are official, legislated functions; unofficially, the government influence goes farther.

The power of the government over banking has reached its highest point coincidentally with the devaluation of the gold dollar. In strict banking logic, the credit of the Federal Government should have suffered when it voided the gold clause in its debt contracts. But logic flies out of the window when power comes in the door; actually the government could borrow as cheaply after that abstractly unethical transaction as before. Whatever bankers may think of government credit and the economic adventures of the administration, they cannot escape lending the government whatever it needs, since banks cannot live without government, and any government which they did not accommodate would soon take them over. Under the circumstances the difference between a forced loan and a consent loan is merely one of rhetoric: in the first case, the money is handed over to a dictator with a gun in his hand; in the other, to a statesman with a broom behind the door.

Those of us who wish to see what the broad pattern of big business is likely to be when the government has made its full force felt under the new urgencies will do well to analyze the present situation in banking. The government is not operating banks of a general character, but is operating, and with apparent success, certain banks such as the Postal Savings Bank and special import and export banks which are considered necessary for non-profit reasons. It is offering to home owners mortgage money at low rates, thereby relieving many savings banks of undigestible, distress items. And it is also providing funds for house repair. It is guaranteeing deposits within certain limits. It is financing a number of projects which would ordinarily be financed through banking channels. It is putting pressure on the corporate banks to lend liberally on long terms to

manufacturers of capital goods and to small business men who are not quite eligible borrowers on their present statements.

In these and other ways the government endeavors to relieve the banks of certain risks inherent in recovery, and equally to bring them to accept slow paper of certain sorts instead of concentrating on short-term loans. But the government, far from showing desire to operate banks, does its enormous business largely through commercial banks. What it has done is to brush off and brighten up certain old standards of banking conduct, establish certain new standards, and dictate certain conditions for the trade in money and credit, leaving the field open for private agencies to operate on those terms under rigid inspection. Because of the tremendous credits placed at the disposal of speculators, both through direct loans to marginal buyers and through the call-money market, and the strain which developed in getting those credits off the books, the whole investment-banking and security-vending system is put under new restraints in the Stock Exchange bill.

In the end, when the government's rescue loans have been funded in an orderly enough manner to permit their entry into the banking system, it is altogether likely that the net result from the present experiments will be a substantial gain in long-range credit planning, with government financing only such projects as seem beneficial but unprofitable. Even though bankers sometimes go astray in their calculations under pressure of popular enthusiasm or gloom, they are rather good planners in their own right; in fact, the larger banks, like the large industrial corporations, plan scrupulously and intelligently for the future as far as they make bold to read it. There may be rogues left in banks and big business, but they are rare specimens, and there

are no rogues among their statisticians, who are held in deservedly higher respect than of yore. But these carefully drawn corporate plans are always at the mercy of political events, over which government has at least some measure of control. Put it this way: a long-range plan in which the government is interested may not work, but without the government's favor and cooperation it is almost certain not to work.

The contest between a business world accustomed to older liberties of action and a government not yet thoroughly at home in its new powers, but wide awake to its increased responsibilities, narrows down to this practicality:—

Is the long-range planning, which is so obviously necessary to ease credit strains and social distress, to be done by the government or by industry? If by industry, in what units — by corporations, or cartels, or trade associations? And, once a plan is arrived at, how is it to be enforced or otherwise matured in a society with our traditional initiatives and incentives?

V

The Marxians say that economic planning must fail in a profit-seeking society. That is true, if the production and distribution of commodities continue to be merely a dog fight for profits. Probably economic planning in America will always be less effective than in Russia. Nevertheless, some excellent results have been achieved by planning in countries which have not thrown capitalism overboard, notably in Denmark, Sweden, Italy, and Great Britain. Probably the British method, in which trades govern themselves with relation to their futures under loose government supervision and prompt financial aid, is the one most suited to America.

We have followed its lead in currency management and the creation of a stabilization fund; and, with due allowances for national differences, our NRA is not as far off the British line as many imagine. Labor unionism is so well developed there that it is no longer an issue, unemployment insurance is an established institution, and the steadiness of the British people is such that their leaders do not need to use catchwords and propaganda in quite our pushing manner. When we have settled those highly controversial points which are the heritage of delayed adolescence, the prospect is that economic planning in America will find its raw material in corporate planning, its refinements and correlations in trade-association planning, its critical review, coördination, and final authority in government planning, with credit control as the backbone of the whole effort.

All along the line, of course, there will be the old, old quarrels in new vocabularies, their essence being, Who shall control the planners? There you have an unplannable item; leave it to the future.

The record of American government as a planner is not at all impressive. We have never been well prepared for any war we entered, even when long bickering preceded the appeal to arms. Farmers are worse off than before the Department of Agriculture was established. As an international lender and debt collector Uncle Sam rates zero, having loaned \$15,000,000,000 without security to belligerents obviously insolvent when the loans were made and now so little disposed to pay that Mr. Chamberlain blithely lowers British taxes without providing for American debt service. Internally the government's planning record is even worse. During the boom it was decided to push public works, notably government buildings, when private building fell

off, yet when that occurred few detailed plans and specifications were ready. Its plan for stabilizing wheat prices scored an impressive failure. The management of the Federal Reserve discount rate has at various times had unfortunate results. You will hardly find an important government plan, from the birth of the nation down to 1932, which has been a distinguished success.

There are several reasons for this discouraging record. In both foreign and domestic policy the American habit has been to live from hand to mouth. The psychology was lacking to make either government or the people take long-range programmes seriously. Also, our recent hastily improvised plans were always somewhat at the mercy of foreign traders and governments. Our national budgets might include installments and interest on Treasury debts from creditor nations; their non-arrival meant deficits. Our heavy private investments abroad were in jeopardy from foreign legislators as well as from the normal risks of international trade and investment; result, lower incomes and less income tax. Attempts to stabilize wheat at a figure bearable by American farmers were offset, in the give-and-take of international trade, by crop pressure from Canada, Argentina, and other wheat-growing areas. As regards the public building programme, the prevalence of high land prices discouraged the acquiring of sites far enough in advance of need to make prompt operations possible after the storm broke.

Nearly all of these efforts were defeated by unforeseen factors; it was discovered, too late, that the economic situation is like a balloon in this respect — put your fist into it in one place and it is certain to bulge out elsewhere, and perhaps at the very point where you least expect it to bulge. Continuity is at the mercy of elections; one adminis-

tration can destroy what another has set up, and localism can riddle a national programme by boring into it with the auger of special interest. Moreover, any government plan is at the mercy of war.

VI

What warrant is there for expecting any significant improvement in these respects? How can government acquire a prescience it has never possessed?

Well, certain factors in the old equation have been removed and others substituted. The most important of these changes is the achievement of a managed currency, protected by a stabilization fund, which is intended to limit the play of world forces as they affect American economy. For some years, at least, domestic wages and prices will be less at the mercy of fluctuating international currency quotations than they have been.

Also, once the fact of a managed currency has been established and accepted by the people and their corporations, long-range funding operations will be simpler than they were when gold was the only element in the standard measure of value. Before the crash one of the larger American corporations studied seriously the problem of insuring its employees against unemployment. Because their plan would affect a definite group, with a long history of high labor morale and small danger of malingering, the investigators concluded that actuarial soundness could be achieved, up to the point of investing the proceeds of their fund. At that point they were blocked. Only through hoarding gold could this corporation be certain of recovering its full investment for employee relief at the time and under the circumstances when that relief would be needed. Its own business was basic; when it was down all

others would be down also; and, with trade generally depressed, government securities would likewise fall, owing to the difficulty of tax collections. Meantime, while prosperity lasted, investment of its insurance funds in the projects of others would encourage those others to overdo in expansion. To some extent, therefore, the effort to assist one group might increase future unemployment risks for other groups. All this could be avoided by hoarding gold; but, although gold holding was not yet illegal, it was clear that if the practice were begun in a large way, and followed by other corporations from similar motives, the government and the banks might be embarrassed. Unable to solve this riddle, the corporation was forced to drop the plan. Under a managed currency it would be entirely feasible to work out, through the coöperation of government, a guarantee of future purchasing power for such a fund, as any loss incurred would be far less than government expenditures for relief of the same corporation's workers once they were thrown out of employment.

The question may be raised, in passing, whether our currency is really a managed currency on the new gold basis. Two facts seem to establish it as such. One is that free trade in gold is suspended; the other, that the effect of foreign-exchange fluctuations on domestic affairs is subject to restraint. Whether the stabilization fund is large enough to afford the desired protection in a hurly-burly world, and whether the population is well enough disciplined to abide by its operations for long, are practical considerations open to doubt; but for the time being the currency is managed. Probably it will continue to be managed somehow. Neither of the two great political parties is likely to lay domestic recovery open to the shocks of the foreign-exchange fluctuations.

VII

More meaningful than any isolated fact, in support of the belief that government planning may improve in quality, is a changed point of view. The recent depression had many fore-runners in America's three centuries of settlement, and some of its factors are as old as man himself; but this last decline in values also had elements new to us as a people and perhaps combined for the first time in human history.

Never before had sovereign powers been in debt to our Treasury on large, long-term obligations. Science and organization had reached new peaks in multiplying man power in the satisfaction of creature wants. The scarcities caused by war had been quickly overcome by goods production, yet the possibility of erasing the huge debt figures on the ledgers seemed hopeless.

For the first time there was no free arable land for out-of-work Americans to run to when jobs failed them. In no other prolonged depression were two thirds of our population living in towns, chiefly on the proceeds of pay rolls and dividends. Never had life been so completely dependent upon contracts and confidence in contracts. Never before had labor entered a depression so deeply in debt, as a result of installment selling. And never before, at least in modern times, had any great nation (Russia) managed to maintain itself on a no-profit and no-debt basis for more than ten years after outlawing private property.

The calmness of Russia, which is apparent even at a distance, is far more impressive than her progress, concerning which not two visitors seem to agree. This demonstration of a new social order affects the public mind in all other countries. Its planning activities are especially well advertised.

Although Americans have borne their ills patiently, and remain individualist by habit and preference, they have apparently become converted to letting politics disburse a large and expanding share of the national income. Henceforth the division of wealth will be a political problem in America, as it was during the American Revolution and for some time afterward. As never before, the American masses are hoping that their government will lead and dominate and plan, to the end that the vast resources and energies of the nation can produce more jobs and more security, more leveling of incomes, a better life for the masses. They are prepared to weather disappointments in the pursuit of that grand objective, and they are not yet ready to 'rush the gate,' but neither are they likely to lose sight of the goal.

Another facet of the hope for more efficient planning is this: better minds are doing the planning; and they give every sign of being able to learn as they go along. The brain trust has withstood one determined attack, and emerged from it both stronger and more conservative than it was. No one need be surprised if business, which is supremely adaptable, comes soon to appreciate the advantage of having brains well represented in a government with which it must deal directly more and more.

The higher type of business executive is more comfortable among professors than among local and sectional politicians; one of the dangers is that business, always on the alert for brains, will hire the government's bright young men away from it, as S. Parker Gilbert was lured away after acting as a one-man brain trust during the Reparations entanglement.

The war risk must be faced; one can only hope that a government seriously at work on economic welfare will be increasingly averse to jeopardizing the

future of its people by appeal to arms. But full internal peace cannot be expected or deserved by any industrialized people whose government does not seek to reduce, as far as may be, the costly fluctuations in value into which a society falls which is geared to the profit-and-debt economy. The task is difficult but imperative; the risks it involves are great, but far less than the risk of avoidance. Like finance itself, planning is a matter of collecting accurate statistics, eliminating all possible risks beyond foreseeing. If there were no risks, there would be no financiers. The difference is that finance plans for near-by profits instead of for continuous social welfare. Theoretically the latter has always been the goal of government; but until recently no American government has given that ideal much more than lip service. Our way is to rush government in as a last reserve to cope with crises after they have developed through the

debt dealings of its impatient citizens. Another such effort and the old Republic is undone.

Americans enmeshed in ticker tape lack both strength and will to break free by a single convulsive effort. We are still a capitalist nation by conviction, but with important reservations recently added. Uncle Sam understands now that he will have to put his accounts in order for a long siege. Thus far in his meteoric rise he has been on a political honeymoon in the midst of resources so abundant that waste was a small matter; now he is deeply in debt and must begin housekeeping, which is the fundamental economics. He has idle sons to put to work and to keep at work. To do this the activities of the shrewder members of his large family require discipline, in order that they neither defeat themselves nor penalize their brothers by swift ambitions too strenuously and cunningly applied.

AN ARTIFICE OF DUST

An artifice of dust and dream,
He walks the drowsy world in June,
Wading in weeds along the stream,
Enamored of the moon.
In mild entrancement where the leaves
Arise about him like a tower,
He wanders gay, or else he grieves,
Hour on lonely hour.
The stars are bright for his delight,
The wind is soft to see him come,
He strolls the still, enchanted night
In strange delirium.

In this amazing mood he lives
The summer through, who dwells amid
The flowers and other fugitives
Where loveliness is hid.
His eyes are dazzled when the sun
Assumes its zenith in the sky,
And when the blossoming is done
He aches till he would die.
He mourns for beauty, it would seem,
As in a spell, because he must.
He is an edifice of dream,
He is an artifice of dust.

LIONEL WIGGAM

PADDLING THROUGH EUROPE

BY MAJOR R. RAVEN-HART

I HAVE a two-seater collapsible canoe, but no friend who has both time enough and money enough (little as is needed) to cruise with me. Consequently I pick up a companion where I find him — sometimes by letter, oftener at the starting point of a trip.

My rivers are rarely the difficult ones; such exist, in abundance, for those who want that side of canoeing. For me, canoeing is more a perfect means of locomotion than a sport in itself — this to answer in advance criticism of the rivers described here. Again, I prefer to eat at riverside inns rather than to camp and cook, especially in Central Europe, where the food is excitingly unknown and where most of these inns have contracted themselves to the Canoe Club Union as 'Canoe Stations,' guaranteeing me cheap food, nearly always camp beds or a hayloft for ten cents or so (as well as real beds, of course), always free garage for my boat, and often free camping grounds. This, also, to answer in advance protests by those who know what 'real' canoeing is — killing and cooking your own food and carrying stores for weeks.

For readers who do not know these collapsible canoes it should be added that they are unbelievably tough envelopes of rubber plus canvas over a demountable framework, in shape like the 'Rob Roy,' lower in the water than a canadian, decked except for a cockpit, and propelled by double paddles. When packed they can be

taken on most European railways as hand baggage, free of charge; as a result, one uses the rail freely to get from river to river, to return home at the end of a trip, and even to 'skip' dull sections.

Here are some specimen trips from the eight thousand miles or so which I have done up to now.

I

Leonard was an apprentice to a famous master potter. He was also a model to a sculptor friend of mine. The potter's craft, at any rate when nearly all is done by hand and great masses of clay have to be slammed about like dough, is a wonderful exercise, and his sixteen-year-old body was a sight for the Greeks.

I borrowed him for a fortnight and we went down the Loire, from Orleans to Nantes. It would need a special phonetic fount to indicate his accent; not only did he mix up French and English in the same sentence, pronouncing his French as English and his English as French, but he had overlaid his original cockney with a correct intonation, in words learned from his artist friends.

The Loire is a pleasant stream, fast clear water between willow banks, not outstanding in beauty except for the châteaux; but since these all stand right on the river, or on one of its tributaries, it makes an ideal cruise from the sight-seeing point of view. We landed at the

front entrances of most of the châteaux, just as visitors in their state barges used to land, and we actually canoed *through* Chenonceaux, which straddles the little Cher. Another advantage is that the navigation is easy despite the fast current — ‘she does feel,’ as Leonard remarked (traced, after some bewilderment, to *filer*); the only difficulty is that one continually mistakes a subsidiary *rio* for the main channel, and ‘*faut* get out agyne and *flotter* her over the shallows.’ Not that this worried us much, as they were nearly always sand, and it gave the excuse for yet another bathe.

We camped practically always, and cooked our evening meal, — there are, unfortunately, no Canoe Stations in France, — one of us walking to the nearest village to purchase provender or tobacco. Lunch at noon we generally ate on a sand bank. Coffee in the morning we had at the first village we reached, and marvelous those huge bowls of creamy coffee were, with crisp crescents and fresh butter.

One curious characteristic of the Loire is the little wandering whirlpools, quite harmless and not even strong enough to turn the boat from her course, but somewhat disconcerting, especially when they play their usual trick of suddenly appearing close beside the canoe. Leonard’s somewhat crude description of ‘a *baleine* that belches’ fits them exactly. But real difficulties there are none. Those accustomed to ‘real’ canoeing should be warned that the joys of long portages through bushes and over rocks are unknown here. When a portage occurs, as often as not it means some twenty yards, from floating landing stage to concrete runway or the like, and not infrequently with a boat car on rails connecting these.

The châteaux made me regret my scanty knowledge of history. Leonard fixed everything by reference to Joan of

Arc and Napoleon, whom he had seen in films. Thus, at the seldom-visited church at Cunault, Romanesque at its best, and, a rarity in France, not disfigured by gaudy statues and paper flowers, Saint Martin was fixed as ‘before Joan’ (only by a thousand years or so), whereas François I, whose salamander writhes all over Chaumont, and the Guise, who was certainly not assassinated where the guide at Blois insists, and Catherine de Médicis, and the many others who come alive again when one sees where they loved and hated, were all ‘between Joan and Napoleon.’ (And after all, why not?) Only at Chinon could I put him on really firm ground, where Joan picked the Dauphin out from among his courtiers; and even this worried him, ‘because in the film, *tu sais*, the château was n’t *ruiné* a bit.’ I fear he suspected that the real castle was somewhere else, or how could they have filmed it?

II

A jolly kid of fourteen, met in Brandenburg the previous season, ought to have come to meet me, but his father was sick. There is no Youth Hostel in Lübbenau, so I decided to make for the nearest one and seek a companion there. As I waited for the train, sitting outside an inn across the road from the station, a whistled folk song, frequently in tune, heralded the arrival of a dusty youngster, who looked at my beer and grinned at me. When he had gulped half a litre or so — I find the combination of red hair, freckles, and a grin quite irresistible — I asked him his plans.

‘Na, I don’t know exactly. I should like to get home about September, because they said they would probably have work again then. I worked for them for two years already, since I was fifteen. What? Oh, making glass bulbs for electric lights. They dropped

about half of us in February, so I went "on the Waltz" — on tramp, I mean.'

'How far did you get?' I asked.

'Oh, all over: as far as München, and up to Stettin, and now I was three days in Berlin. I liked Berlin, especially the big stores with those "roll-stairs," and I meant to go and see my aunt in Neukölln, but I never got that far' — it is a good seven miles — 'because I always saw something else on the way.'

So of course I invited him to spend the next ten days or so with me, if we got on together, promising to drop him near Berlin, and on the Neukölln side at that. We walked back to the boat-house and built my canoe, which took about twenty minutes, as he was a complete novice.

The Spreewald is, from the point of view of the canoeist, unique. It is a labyrinth of narrow channels, practically without current, walled densely by oaks and alders and beeches, with rare farm clearings. All the traffic is by water; we met the postman in his boat, and families going to church, the women in the old Wendish costumes, with lace headdresses reminiscent of Brittany — and the church services have sermons and hymns in Wendish as well as German; and there was even a boat with a blind organ grinder whose son tows him daily to his pitch, and who started to play when he heard our paddles.

We spent three days here, losing our way and refinding it and getting lost again, returning eventually to our boathouse quarters every evening. My map was no good, but even with a perfect one it would mean constant attention, and it is more fun to get lost, anyway. Sometimes the channel petered out and we had to float the boat over the shallowest parts, wading on the sandy bottom. Twice we got to locks and had in one case to pay three

cents dues and in the other case to work the lock ourselves. One could easily spend a month in this 'upper' forest without twice doing the same trip.

After that, we made for the 'lower' forest, less extensive but even finer, with sections that are believed to be untouched since all this area was covered with forests. We bathed almost hourly here, naked, so lonely was it. Beyond came the almost as deserted lakes of the Dubrow, with perfect yellow sand beaches below deep green-blue pine slopes, and water nearly as clear as the Swiss lakes.

Sometimes we camped, sometimes we slept at Canoe Stations on camp beds or in haylofts, and once at a clubhouse, after a long evening chatting with the members — and what a joy it is to be accepted as a fellow sportsman and not treated as a mere tourist! Erich enjoyed himself vastly, and after the first two days got quite into the easy technique of the double paddle. He found this way of traveling 'lordly' (*nobel*, he called it), despite the fact that my daily expenses for the two of us ran only into four marks or so.

As we got to know each other better he became confidential. Like so many young Germans to-day, he was Irish in his outlook on the Nazi Government — strongly class-conscious, hating it in theory, and yet ready to defend it as having saved Germany from disintegration.

'And now,' he predicted (the wish no doubt being father and mother and midwife to the thought), 'what will happen is that we, the rank and file of the Nazis, we shall go more and more Communist, and if the leaders don't follow, we shall put our own leaders in.'

'*Ach was! Red' kein Blech!*' I told him.

'I'm not talking rot! Why, *kucke mal*, I worked for a couple of months at an *Arbeitsdienst* camp — you know,

voluntary work — and we sang the Nazi songs in camp or on our way to the moors, but when we got there we put our own words to them, or we sang Communist songs, and the group leaders joined in — or we would have dropped them into the drainage ditches we were cutting. *Na also!* That's the way it will go all over!

My promised ten days brought us leisurely to near Berlin, where I duly sent him off to visit his aunt. He came to have supper with me once, at an Aschinger — about the equivalent of a New York Childs', but the first restaurant he had ever been in, and the peak of luxury. He insisted on giving me his one treasure '*als Andenken*,' the buttonhole badge of his football club.

III

Siegfried was sent along to me by a friend who knew that I was looking for a companion. His entry was like the switching on of an extra hundred-watt light: a mop of brilliantly blond hair, eyes like the sun seen through a wave, and the whitest of teeth in a shy smile. Physically he was, I suppose, about perfect; it came almost as a shock to learn that he worked as a tailor, with his father.

We built the boat at Kreuzburg, at an inn just by the old bridge, and started off down the Werra. Siegfried was an ideal companion for a canoe cruise. He often sat silent and paddled steadily for a solid hour, till the rhythm seemed to take us along more than the actual paddle strokes. I have waked at night after a long canoe day to find the bed rocking below me like the choir at Solesmes toward the end of Lauds, and had to make a definite effort of will to put my hand out and down to the moonlit floor to prove it not to be water. When he spoke, it was generally to murmur something like '*Herrlich!*' — the *r*'s sounding like the purr

of a happy lion; but now and then he electrified me with a perfect phrase, such as, of poplars wind-flickering on a hill crest, 'black candle flames, *siehst du?*'

It was '*herrlich*,' the scenery changing at every moment, with sheer limestone cliffs mirrored in the water, or steep wooded slopes suddenly opening out to distant views of bold hills as the pleasant current swung us round a corner. We slept at Canoe Stations as a rule. That at Werleshausen I remember with particular pleasure, on a great wooded horseshoe bend of the river. Before supper we walked up a steep forest path to visit a Youth Hostel in a restored castle. Siegfried was charming on the way up, continually stopping to admire the view, or to remove a nonexistent pebble from his shoe whenever he saw me breathless. We sang folk songs in the courtyard with the boys overnighthing there, and as a result arrived back late for supper, greatly annoying our hostess. Our appreciation of her fruit pie appeased her, and next morning she charged me four marks for our suppers, hayloft, breakfasts, and provender for midday, and came down to the landing stage after us to apologize and return thirty-five pfennigs overcharged in error.

Four days brought us to Münden, where the Werra and Fulda unite to form the Weser, and we continued on this river; it was equally beautiful, at any rate as far as Minden, but the weather broke. Rain mattered little as far as comfort was concerned, since we were not forced to camp and had no portages; that is to say, we could stay in the boat, and, with sleeved waterproof capes worn outside the auxiliary deck, not a drop enters. (It should be explained that this extra deck covers in the normally open cockpit, fitting closely round our waists. It is also used for rapids.) Nor were we chilly,

since the exercise keeps the trunk warm, and the legs are surprisingly cozy under cover — only our hands got numbed till we could hardly feel the paddle shafts.

Still, a driving misty rain kills the view, and it was not till two seasons later that I really came to appreciate the Weser. On this trip all that I remember with pleasure are the evenings in the Canoe Stations or exploring the little towns — Bodenwerder, with Münchhausen's birthplace and a superb archaic crucifix in the church; Hamelin of the Rat-Catcher, with some of the finest half-timbering in Germany; Höxter, with curious old corners straight out of Hans Grimm.

One night we spent at a Workers' Canoe Club, on straw mattresses on the floor of their boathouse. This was in 1931, and they were loud in prophecies of what they would do if the Nazis 'gave trouble.' Siegfried was contemptuous; his father had been a Social Democrat under the Empire, when this entailed opprobrium and worse: '*Aber diel! die quatschen nur, and the Nazis and Communists work!*'

IV

Siegfried came with me again last season, on the Oertze and Aller. We met at Celle, at the Canoe Club there, and sat all the evening chatting with the members and singing folk songs to the guitar of a student.

My neighbor, whom I learned to be a professor, asked me, apropos of nothing, had I ever thought what a pity it was that no 'King Victor' had succeeded William IV.

'*Aber, bitte, bedenken Sie doch!* If Queen Victoria had been a boy, you would be in your own country here in Hannover, and Prussia would never have been able to dominate the German Confederation over the head of Hannover with Great Britain behind

it. And so there would have been no 1870, and no 1914.' The idea has fascinated me ever since.

We had amusing moments on the forest-lined Oertze, thanks to fallen trees, under which we usually persuaded the boat to pass while we squatted like monkeys on the trunk. This brought us to the less interesting Aller, and this in turn to the lower Weser, and so to Bremen, where we parted, he to return home and I to take the rail with my packed boat to the Lake of Geneva. Later on I gave him my first canoe, after some 7500 miles' service, and he expects to use her on easy waters for some two or three years more.

On our last evening before Bremen we were chatting happily in the Canoe Station with the local habitués (since, let it be remembered, these Canoe Stations are first and foremost *inns*, and cater to canoeists only as a side line) when the local policeman arrived and demanded our papers. This is such a rare occurrence in Germany that I think he was merely inquisitive, like most villagers. My passport aroused no comment, but a small book that Siegfried produced made him stiffen up, and he returned it with an attempt at a Roman salute and with the '*Hei!ler!*' that the Nazi greeting has boiled down to. Siegfried looked sheepish. When we were alone he shamefacedly passed it over to me — the identification book of an '*S. A. Mann.*'

'*Doch, was willst du?* My father was losing all his business, and now we've got it all back, and we make the uniforms for the other S. A. men: and besides, *weisst du*, there's a lot in it. . . . *Och, reden wir wat anders!*'

V

I had come down the Danube from Ulm with a Bavarian schoolmaster. On arrival at Passau we found the

frontier closed to German exit, on account of the financial crisis, so that I found myself stranded with no companion and little chance of getting one. I was strongly disinclined to take a two-seater solo down an unknown river — though in reality the difficulties of this part of the Danube are exaggerated in the guidebook, written, as it is, for beginners.

It is worth while adding here that for practically all German, Austrian, French, Swiss, and Czech rivers these canoeing guides exist, a vital point for the novice, since he is far safer on a really tricky river with a guidebook than on a far easier one without information. I emphasize this also so that prospective canoeists may not make idiotic mistakes through not planning a trip, like someone I know who thought he could paddle *up* the Loire, and who ended by doing weeks and weeks on French canals, which is like visiting 'London' by walking through all the duller suburban streets.

At the exact moment when I had despaired of the trip and begun to unbuild the boat, a two-seater arrived with one occupant. He turned out to be a Hungarian, and therefore unaffected by the frontier closure. Finally, to pile on coincidences as I should never dare to do in fiction, he was solo because a friend of mine in Paris had at the last moment been unable to come.

We joined forces, leaving my boat in Passau, and I found myself, for the first time since my very first trip in a collapsible, sitting in the forward seat — Ferenc, as owner and therefore skipper, taking the aft one.

He was a viola player, and a consummate musician. Why is it that violinists are often quite superficial musically, but viola players never? I owe to him what is perhaps the best description of the Danube from Passau to Vienna: 'a symphony in three move-

ments, *allegro appassionato*, *adagio minore*, *andante semplice*.' First of all, piles of rock chords, towering up one above the other, with a quiver of violin forests clothing them and with an occasional castle perched high up like a trumpet call: uninterruptedly *crescendo* (save for the melodic episodes of side valleys, peaceful, smooth-meadowed, with white villages snuggled down into them) until it reaches a climax at the horseshoe bend of the Struden; and then very gradually dying away as far as Linz. From there, the second movement, flat melancholy willow banks, like long wood-wind middle pedals, with behind them a fugue-like complexity of dead arms, ramifying mile-wide into the country, dividing and reconnecting, with dying villages hidden among them. The *adagio*, by the way, refers to the absence of current in these dead arms, that of the main stream still remaining so strong that fifty and sixty miles are easy daily runs instead of the twenty or thirty normal on most rivers. And then another change, to the Wachau, a *pastorale* of gently swelling hills and fruit trees and chessboard hedges and rococo villages, each with its own motif, yet harmonious in the whole — Dürnstein with the *hautbois* acidity of the castle ruins where Blondel's song found Richard, but with creamy-smooth cello themes below where the baroque church and cloister overhang the river; Melk, Handelian trumpet-and-drum pomp at its best in the palace-monastery; *chalmereau*-clarinet villages like Aggstein and Sankt Johan and 'Crooked Nut-Tree Town' and dozens more.

This part, incidentally, serves to introduce an effective protest against a journalist who wrote of rivers as taking one to the 'back doors' of European towns. The truth is exactly the opposite. The towns built themselves facing the rivers and offer them their best

sides — it is the railways that had to sneak in later by alleyways and ash cans.

And so to Vienna; but to watch the death in poverty of a city I have known as the best of good companions, above all feeling myself by my nationality implicated in the murder — that is something too sad to dwell upon.

VI

I had come down the Moselle from Metz to Trier, solo, and my experience in landing there had made me resolve not to continue without a companion — cramp caught me in the calf of my leg at the critical moment, so that I made some seven tries in front of an amused crowd before I could finally fall out on to the landing stage and rub the muscles clear. Stupid little things like this make it much better not to be alone.

It was my first trip in Germany, so that I had no idea where to look for a companion, and when the innkeeper suggested the Youth Hostel my inexperience led me to visit it in the afternoon instead of waiting till evening when the 'wanderers' arrive, so that there was practically no one there.

I felt thoroughly disheartened as I walked back down the steep hill, and my pleasure was all the greater when I heard a hail from behind me and turned to see a whirl of white arms and legs, with a grin in the middle of it. It was Paul, from Hamburg, who had just heard of my offer.

The Moselle is the ideal river for the beginner — not a single portage, enough current to be useful but never dangerous, no steamers, pleasant placid scenery with rolling vineyard-clad hills, delightfully German townlets, and the best-organized Canoe Stations in all Europe. *And* the wines — especially those unknown local vintages made by

the innkeepers themselves from their own grapes, and drunk with them in the cool of their cellars. Paul was a teetotaler into the bargain, so that I had to drink for two on this trip.

He was a solid, sensible kid of seventeen. A year previously he had seen that no work was going to be available at home, so he had set out on his bicycle to see Europe, living on a few marks sent him by his family from time to time, on what he earned by odd jobs now and then, and occasionally by selling postcards which he 'painted' — chiefly with a toothbrush and boot blacking.

It was a curious trip, thanks to the exceptionally high water that year. For example, we ran 'aground' once on the back of a garden seat, where normally visitors would have sat high up on the bank to watch us pass; and another day we canoed in between the gateposts of a Canoe Station, up over the garden path, and landed right on the doorstep, where the host stood to welcome us.

Paul and I got on so well that we continued on down the Rhine — right to Utrecht, in fact. This is, of course, not the 'famous' part above Coblenz, which I did on another occasion (and consider hopelessly overrated, spoiled beyond redemption by motor roads and railways on each bank, and passenger steamers and motor launches all over the river). Still, this lower Rhine has a certain placid charm of its own, long stretches of pasture with pollard willows and black-and-white cows; but one needs a gas mask for that awful section through Duisburg.

VII

The Oder is not one of the 'stars' among German rivers, but by 1933 I had done most of the others. Above Breslau there are too many locks; below that town it is an ideal fine-weather

stream, to do lazily, floating down in the sunshine, bathing on the perpetual sand beaches, and camping near the oak forests. I had, unfortunately, just one sunny day in about ten; still, I enjoyed the trip, thanks to my companion.

Kurt was the fifteen-year-old son of my hotel keeper at Breslau, and I took to him from his first appearance, when his father proposed him as my companion — an ugly kid, with a grin that gashed his face in half, but delightfully German, complete with heel-click and the funny head-bow (as if the upper vertebræ had suddenly changed to rubber) and a clumsy handshake of a boyish paw. He was an enthusiastic member of the 'Hitler Jugend,' the organization which has taken over the various forms of Boy Scouts and the like; and at his own suggestion wore the uniform for our trip, including the useful dagger duly engraved with 'Blood and Honor.'

A parenthesis. In theory, I thoroughly agree that such militarization of the young is very deplorable. In practice, I am, thank Heaven, still enough of a boy to realize that an item like this dagger gives the final touch of charm that a right-minded boy finds lacking in more peacefully equipped organizations; and enough of an Irishman to sympathize with *Gleichberechtigung*, 'A Nation Once Again,' and so on — although, of course, I sympathize more with any movement when struggling against a majority than when it has attained power.

That first day was marvelous. I believe we bathed seven or eight times, the H. J. costume, needless to say, giving place to a far more antique 'uniform,' both in and out of the boat, so lonely was it.

Kurt's great preoccupation at the moment was with his 'Sport's Badge,' and he was incredulous when I asked what it was.

'I wo! But haven't you got it in England?' he asked. 'Can't a boy there win something to show he is good at sport?'

I explained that he could, of course, win medals and cups for whatever he was good at, and how he would be encouraged to specialize in this or that particular sport.

'*Mensch! Iss ja Blödsinn!* To get our badge we have to be good all round.' And he demonstrated, with the aid of a booklet rummaged out of a boy's pocket treasures in his discarded clothes (we were eating on the bank, that dagger serving prosaically to spread butter). 'You see, I have passed the swimming test, and I did the hundred meters in thirteen comma five seconds. Now I have three more tests to do within a year. I tried for the high jump, but I only did a meter twenty instead of a meter thirty, and I think I shall try the long jump next time instead — and then for the other two I shall try spear-throwing and the long-distance run, I think.'

'How do you get tested?' I asked.

'Oh, nearly any club does it, especially since Hitler made them all have junior sections and Sport Doctors to see we don't take things that might strain us. Or the police, or any Army detachment, or lots of school-teachers can do it. And then when I am eighteen I can take the harder test. Have n't you seen that bronze badge lots of people wear — even soldiers and postmen and so on in uniform? Why, it's been going for years and years, and *wir rackern uns ab* to get it, and practise all the time.'

And he did hand stands and long jumps and, naked in the sunlight, threw my long-suffering tent pole to prove it.

At one of our Canoe Stations we found preparations for the *Sonnenwende* being made, the fire feast of the summer solstice, revived in Germany

before the war and, of course, encouraged, for its Nordic character, by the present government. Kurt found himself an honored guest, while I watched as unobtrusively as possible, only re-appearing when he dragged me out to leap the embers with him — and my wish was for his lasting friendship.

It was a futile little show, judged as such, the actors in the fire-kindling scene (where the evil spirits of slackness and despondency hinder the German race from relighting the Holy Fire) not knowing their parts, the girls who folk-danced having to sing the tune as well, and getting hopelessly out of breath, and the local Hitler organizer being a rotten speaker; but the earnestness of all those taking part, the shining young eyes reflecting the huge bonfire, and the feeling that one was linked not only to all Germany of to-day, but back also through history to paganism, made it more impressive than I liked to admit to myself at the time.

VIII

An advantage of writing articles on canoeing is that one sometimes meets companions as a result. I did a trip from the Lake of Geneva to the Mediterranean with an English public-school boy who knew me only as author until we met at Montreux.

The Lake is a wonderful place to start a cruise, with water so clear that I found myself literally dizzy on first looking over the side of the canoe, as if it were magically floating on air and liable to crash at any moment; and with the heaven-storming terraces of Mont Blanc to make one forget the gritty tourist-haunted terraces of the hotels with their painted iron chairs. *We* camped, of course, chiefly along the French shore. The arrival of a *garde-champêtre* just as we got the tent up for the first time scared me, — in France

camping is so little practised that one is always expecting a *procès-verbal*, — but he proved a gloomily amusing person, with stories of a nest of adders close to the site we had chosen, and of corpses (of canoeists, of course) washed ashore there daily.

My companion was a typical British sixth-form schoolboy, painfully 'correct,' allowing himself no enthusiasms for anything, no views on politics or art or literature, no visible interest in sport or the cinema or the theatre, and of course never mentioning his work. And, with all that, a quite charming companion, as restful and harmless as an English summer afternoon. They grow up suddenly in his class, usually while at their university; a long boyhood has its advantages, especially as compared with the French leap from child to young man, the French *boy* of the better classes not existing.

The combination of this lake and the Rhone would be one of the best trips in Europe, were it not for the short rail journey intervening; harmless as a rail section is with a collapsible, it nevertheless breaks the continuity of the mood. But the Rhone dives into the earth and disappears altogether in one place, and another gorge has never yet been navigated, so that the break is inevitable. After it, one restarts with a glorious change, from the open lake to a narrow gorge, gray limestone cliffs crowned with dismantled forts and coming right down to the water, and from a mill pond to a current of eight miles an hour or more, which makes for some awkward moments — the rapids at St. Brénaz and the bridges at Lyon, for example. We piloted a Canadian through these — its occupants, an English undergraduate clothed in very scanty bathing pants and a monocle, and a German boy whose armorial signet ring was the most noticeable article of his attire, had to stop to bail out after the rapids, although

we (thanks to the auxiliary deck already mentioned) had shipped hardly a drop.

The Rhone below Lyon is a river that improves on acquaintance. The first time I did it I enjoyed only the current and the towns — Vienne, with a bit of Roman road over which Pontius Pilate must have walked, and a little temple more charming than the more famous one at Nîmes, and sympathetic streets full of bright colonial uniforms; Viviers, a dying town, full of seminarians and old ladies in black with prayer books, where one feels forced to talk in whispers and hug the walls; Pont St. Esprit, with its lovely but difficult bridge (they are going to salvage the sunken barge full of the art treasures stolen by Catherine de Médicis from Arles); and of course Avignon. But now each time I go down the river its melancholy bushy banks please me more and more, and the change from France to Provence is more and more looked forward to. At Vienne the accent begins to harden, and at Valence cypresses and olives appear, and at Tarascon the air is full of the iron-clad bowls and the accent seems equally metallic and almost as dangerous.

We took the 'Little Rhone' below Tarascon, making for the sea and the hideous village of Les Saintes Maries, bungaloid growths round one of the finest churches in France. And the 'best' hotel here is, I hope, the worst in Europe.

IX

But of all my cruises perhaps the most curious was on the Vah, above and below the town of Žilina. The little river offers only about two days, but it was on my route from Budapest to the Oder, and what there is of it is very fine — angry sharp rocks (above and below water!) with castle ruins on the heights, and little herd-boys in curious felt-like costumes or bathing naked among their cattle, and women in embroidered blouses and puffed white sleeves and bell skirts of almost crinoline fullness on the ferries.

My companion was a Boy Scout of fourteen; a Jewish shopkeeper (all the merchants seem to be Jews) sent him to my hotel, where he introduced himself as 'Boy Scout — boat — partner.' We spent the evening constructing a vocabulary on the basis of such international words, since, although between us we spoke nine languages, there was no overlap. 'Deck,' for instance, meant that rapids were coming and the auxiliary deck must be added; 'photo,' either that I wanted to stop to photograph, or that something was coming which he thought I should like; his piano lessons helped with 'presto' and 'lento'; a few Russian words that I had collected during the war proved unexpectedly useful; and gestures and grins filled up the blanks.

He is learning Esperanto for our next trip.

THE CLUB SECRETARY

BY LORD DUNSANY

I THINK I have said that it is the custom in our Club to discuss gardening during the spring and summer, or rather to hear the tales of what various members have been doing in their gardens, or of any wonderful growth that has come unwontedly early or incredibly large in the garden of any one of us; but when the season of fogs returns, and the sun sets behind houses before the middle of luncheon, it is rather our custom to tell tales of brighter scenes, to keep our little crescent before the fire from falling asleep, or from drifting away one by one to toy with some tedious business. It was upon such an occasion as this that one of our group in his chair before the fire, who seemed about to be falling asleep, suddenly opened his eyes wide and exclaimed: 'For the Lord's sake someone tell us of somewhere where there is sunlight.' And I heard Jorkens draw in a breath. But, before he had time to speak, the voice of Terbut was raised. 'And let's hear of England this time,' he said. 'I'm tired of the ends of the earth.'

A more deliberate attempt to put Jorkens out of his stride I have seldom heard. But it had no effect. 'I saw a curious thing once in England,' Jorkens said; 'a very curious thing. I was taking a walk out of London once — a long walk with sandwiches, and a good flask, one that would hold a pint. Partly I went for exercise, but it was more to please the spirit than the body that I went. I had somehow got tired of pavements. You know how one

feels then; and spring was coming on with a rush. I don't know what way I went, only that it must have been roughly southwards, for the sun was in my eyes, until it got round to my right.

'I started early and had no lunch until some time after two, for I would not sit down and eat till I was completely clear of London. I must have done a good twenty miles. I sat myself down on a bank of grass by the road, with a hedge in front of me as green as a meteor, along the top of a bank on the opposite side. Primroses were out on the bank, and early violets. There I ate my lunch, with birds singing, and white clouds scurrying over the dome of a blue sky. What was the other side of the hedge on the bank I had no idea: I could see neither through nor over. I sat there wondering comfortably all through my lunch. And after lunch my long walk, the bright sun, birds singing, and one thing and another, were bringing a drowsiness on me, when a sudden bout of curiosity made me leap up and cross the road, and look for a gap in the hedge. Through a gap low down among the stems of the thorn I saw smooth lawns stretching away, and a little house with bow windows and bottle-glass panes and red roof, that was clearly the house of a golf club. And looking at it through the hedge never soothed my curiosity, for the light of spring was hanging so strongly over those lawns that they somehow seemed to have the glow of lawns seen long ago

in the early morning and remembered almost from infancy; there seemed something as magical about them as that.

'I was a lot slenderer in those days, and once I got my head through the gap in the hedge it was only a matter of wriggling. No one was playing golf, and I walked up to the clubhouse with not a soul in sight, and no sound of anyone stirring. Grass of Parnassus was flowering in such abundance that I wondered if those smooth lawns were not too marshy for golf. I came all in the silence to the oaken door of the golf club. And there a hall porter, glittering with livery that was out of date in its splendor, opened the door at once. I had then to apologize and explain I was lost; and, thinking to put a better face on it to an official of the club than to the hall porter, or at any rate hoping to gain time, I asked to see the secretary. Well, the secretary was in the little clubhouse, and the hall porter brought him at once.

"What can I do for you?" he said, all amiability.

"I wanted to apologize," I said. "I am not a member of your golf club. I lost my way on your links."

'He smiled away my apology. "It's not a golf club," he said.

"Not?" said I.

"No," he replied airily. Why did I say "airily"? He seemed to me airy. He seemed volatile, energetic, even for a club secretary. "No, not a golf club," he said.

"I quite thought it was a golf club," said I.

"No," he replied. "It's a club, as a matter of fact, for poets."

"For poets?" I said.

"Yes," said the secretary, "and, what may quite surprise you, for the poets of all time."

"Of all time?" I said.

"Yes," he repeated, and, beckoning me forward to the inner doors of the

hall, he pointed through its glass panes. "There you see Swinburne," he said, "talking to Herrick."

'And sure enough I recognized the earnest face of Swinburne talking, and saw the man that the secretary told me was Herrick giving little answering chuckles. And somehow, in spite of what the secretary had said, it did n't surprise me at all; there was something so fairylike in the light on the lawns before I got to the club, and something so far from this age in the little house, that it seemed only natural that it had gathered up from the ages what was lost to other lawns. I should not have been surprised to see Homer himself. And sure enough there he stood, stroking his beard, eyes full of thought, giving me somehow the impression of a most tremendous Tory.

"And there's Stephen Phillips," he said, "talking to Dante."

'And I recognized the two men, and seemed to see, through the rather dim glass of the door, a certain resemblance of feature.

"A bit lucky, was n't he, getting elected?" I said, pointing to Stephen Phillips.

"Well, yes," said the secretary, "but you have luck in all clubs — there's always somebody who may be just not quite."

'And then Tennyson went by, on the other side of the shimmering glass. I recognized him immediately.

"He's having a bit of a slump over there," I said, pointing over the lawns to the way by which I had come.

"Oh, he's all right here," said the secretary.

"And the waiters?" I said, for they were passing to and fro.

"All writers too," he said. "All wrote good stuff. But not immortal. He's the best we have on our staff," he said, pointing to the hall porter. "That's Pope."

"Pope," I said. "Is it really? I

suppose your standard of membership . . ."

"Pretty high," he said. "You see, we have Shakespeare, Milton, and all of them. There goes Shelley."

'And sure enough I saw a light figure slipping by, to drop what looked like a political pamphlet unnoticed in somebody's hat.

"And the name of the club?" I asked.

"The Elysian Club," he said.

'Somehow I had thought so.

'Pope only hall porter, Homer himself a member. Who, then, was the secretary? That was the question that in this extraordinary club, where I might have found so much of overpowering interest, became the one thought that absorbed me. What a power is curiosity, when once awakened! I might have heard Shakespeare speak. And yet I wasted my time in trying to satisfy my miserable curiosity as to who the secretary was.

"Of course you write yourself," I said.

"Very little," he answered; "I gave it up long ago."

'Gave it up! That was even more baffling than ever. Yet greater than Pope, whoever he was. Was he Keats? I thought for a moment. For Keats perhaps wrote little compared to some of them. But no, Keats never gave it up.

'There was nothing for it but to ask him his name. Which I did. And he told me. And, do you know, it conveyed to me nothing whatever. And that was awkward. It left me saying, "Yes, yes, of course," and remarks like that, too transparent not to be seen

through. But he took no offense. "No, no, you would n't have heard of me," he said. "I never wrote enough. One great line — that's what the members say. If I had written thirty I could have been a member myself. But only one great line, they say. Better than that fellow, you know," he said, pointing to the hall porter. "Yet not enough for full membership. But I *am* an honorary member."

'Well, I've read a good deal of poetry, knocking about the world, and the line might convey something where the name never could. And sure enough it did. I asked him if he would mind repeating the line to me; and he began at once. "A rose-red," he began, but I got the rest of it in before he had time to. "City half as old as time," said I.

"Yes," he said. "A rose-red city half as old as time," repeating the beautiful line like a good host relishing a taste of his century-old port. "It's a pity I could n't have made thirty of them; but I am really very comfortable as I am. Would you like to see my office?"

'Well, he showed me into a very snug little room, and I should have liked to stop and talk with him, and especially to see more of the members; but, after all, I had forced my way into the club, and had taken up quite enough of his time already. So I offered him my pint flask, which of course I had filled with whiskey, as some slight return for his trouble. And, do you know, he drank up every drop of it. When I opened it for a drop for myself when I got back to the road, I found it was quite empty.'

Nominations for the Club proposed and seconded by ATLANTIC readers will receive the thoughtful consideration of the Governing Board

PIONEERS OF SILENCE

BY MARGARET PRESCOTT MONTAGUE

I

My title is suggested by a letter from the Editor of the *Atlantic* in which he compares deaf people to the early pioneers who were thrown in upon themselves for companionship. He says further that the wholesome sweetness of many of the deaf seems almost in direct proportion to their handicap. I confess I had not regarded us as an especially sweet lot. My personal reaction to such kind words is somewhat that of the Negro who, when a white man, too hurried to note his color, dashed up exclaiming, 'Here, can you change five dollars?' replied with courteous regret, 'I can't, boss, but I thanks you for the compliment.'

As for being pioneers, perhaps all humans are that, emigrants from some native land temporarily forsaken to become homesteaders of life, until, the job completed, or cut short, death conducts us back again through the last frontier. At any rate it has always seemed to me that those who explore the wilderness of some physical handicap may indeed blaze trails, and hack out dead wood for later comers. Did not Robert Louis Stevenson do this to some extent for the tubercular? And what a pioneer for both the deaf and the blind has Helen Keller been!

Since, with a somewhat care-free gesture, I tossed a recent article into the *Atlantic* dealing with my own experience, and was startled by the tidal wave of letters from the deaf which it

raised, it has occurred to me that I too in a humble way might do a little trail blazing through that silent country. Hence this paper, which is written both on behalf of the deaf and to them. On behalf of the deaf, since it seems to me that someone should speak frankly about us to hearing people. To the deaf, because, though I cannot truthfully say, 'Come on in, the water's fine,' still, through certain new developments of education and science, together with the facing of some facts and the pondering on a philosophy or two, one may find the old swimming hole not so bad after all.

II

First, then, a word to hearing people, with the hope that it may make things easier for some other deaf person somewhere. After all, since we have set aside one day in the year when ministers preach on 'Be Kind to Dumb Animals,' why not take a little time also to study kindness to deaf humans? Even as I write this I seem to hear a faint rustle over the country as of Bibles being turned for texts. Don't bother, brothers; I'm already in the pulpit! But if you must have a text, remember it is written, 'Thou shalt not curse the deaf.'

Deafness is the stepchild among the handicaps. It begets more irritation, more ridicule, and less understanding than any other physical impairment.

If we ourselves are not actually cursed, our deaf ears are frequently the cause of extreme exasperation, not always suppressed. No doubt we should be as cross ourselves if the circumstances were reversed. Still, it is not always easy to remember that the irritation is addressed to our ears and not actually to ourselves, for after all one's self is very close to one's organs. 'I am rapidly becoming a source of discipline to my family,' writes one deaf lady. Presumably Attila liked being the Scourge of God, but few of us enjoy that rôle — it makes us feel too apologetic.

We become the butt of ridicule, too. If you doubt this, recall how often some old deaf person is the subject of a comic strip. Do you ever see blind people caricatured, and would it amuse you if you did? This is due, I think, to the fact that people do not realize the difficulties of being deaf. Someone (who took liberties with truth) has said, 'Blindness is an affliction; deafness is only a nuisance.' Blindness is indeed an affliction, but so is deafness. Of the two, — and I speak with some knowledge of both, — I think loss of hearing causes more nervous strain, isolation, and general suffering than loss of sight. It is not as crippling a handicap, but is a more exasperating one. If the deaf have any wholesome sweetness of character, as the Editor of the *Atlantic* is kind enough to contend, it is because, like the syrup of sugar cane, it has been ground out between an upper and nether millstone.

This frank speaking will shock some people, the deaf as much as the hearing. There is a convention among the handicapped of keeping a stiff upper lip and making the best of things. Thank God for it! Only thus may such a life be lived. Every now and then, however, some truth should be spoken. I do not want the thankless task, but

am assuming it deliberately with the hope, as I have said, of making the going a little easier for other deaf people. With this 'porpoise close behind me,' then, let me quote the vigorous words of another deaf lady, who, to judge from her photograph, is gallant, cheerful, and humorous, just the person to go pioneering with, or to lead forlorn hopes. She says, 'I have never been able to see any advantage whatever in slight or increasing deafness, and I hate, detest, and abhor not hearing as much as I ever did.' Good for you, my girl! You belong, I gather, to the school of those who believe that happy and useful lives may be lived under almost any physical handicap — but in spite of it, not because of it.

This, however, is nebulous and speculative, whereas I set out to hurl some truths as concrete as brickbats. Here's one: The way of the deaf person is made hard largely through the unconscious cruelty of hearing people. This is usually due to a lack of understanding of how serious the handicap is. One rarely thinks that blindness is an advantage, but one is constantly told that deafness is. Has n't a poet written something like the following?

The toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each tooth-prick goes —
The butterfly beside the road
Preaches contentment to that toad.

I know Edison is said to have regarded his deafness as a blessing. I wonder! Well, if he did, he was Edison and unique. If anyone really wants to discover the advantages in being deaf, let him stuff up his own ears and try it for a week. A week! He'd have the plugs out in two seconds — the first instant anyone tried to talk to him. I sympathize, of course, with those who have to live with a deaf person. That is hard, I know. There is one thing harder, however, and that is to be the deaf person lived with.

III

I asked one lady, a particularly charming one, what she especially minded about her deafness. She said, 'People's impatience, and being regarded as stupid.' Yes, it would be helpful if our friends would realize that it is deaf ears, not feeble minds, that make us slow on the uptake. Some people do, indeed, tuck in behind their deaf ears and dry up, but most of us are a rather alert lot. We have to be. To keep in the conversational running at all, we must constantly perform mental gymnastics which brighten up the wits. Something like this is always happening:—

My friend, in conversation, mentions a name that I fail to catch. I ask her to repeat, which she does in a lower tone. Again I miss it. It is either Shelley, Schiller, or Schelling, all to defective ears much alike. To ask her to repeat again may dry up her delightful talk altogether. Still, it's the pivotal word for all she is saying, so I must cast about a bit for the scent. She is not philosophical, so I drop Schelling overboard. Shelley or Schiller, then? I *think* it is Shelley. I risk it. It is! Eureka! I'm hot on the trail, in at the death, giving tongue joyfully. Still, it required agility to get there.

Perhaps it is because people unconsciously associate deaf ears with feeble minds that we are so frequently treated like children unable to speak for ourselves. I once arose and departed from a doctor's office because he persisted in talking over my head to a hearing friend who happened to be present, instead of to me, though the subject of conversation was an organ of my own, which presumably, since it was in my person rather than in hers, I knew more about than she did. Perhaps he was merely following the path of least resistance, which for him was 'Talk to hearing ears rather than to

deaf ones.' If so, then he could scarcely blame me when I also followed that same path, which for me led straight out of his office and away to another doctor, all flags flying.

At this point I may touch lightly upon the matter of being patted, though I feel it must be approached with the utmost delicacy. A friendly and understanding pat in season is indeed a pleasant thing. It is only those that fall upon us in and out of all seasons which are irksome. At a public meeting I once sat next a lady, a very nice lady, but given to patting me as though I were an extremely young child behaving nicely. Halfway through the meeting I uncrossed my ankles and recrossed them — a simple human gesture which she must have seen performed many times. The instant I stirred, however, pat, pat, pat, fell her motherly hand upon my shoulder. What were they, I asked myself? Pats of approval, of sympathy, or just of sheer admiration for the accomplishment of an act so difficult by one so young? At funerals also I am unduly patted, even when I have no close connection with the deceased.

IV

Next we come to the matter of conversation. Members of the Junior League are learning to transcribe books for the blind — a splendid thing! With even less effort they might acquire the art of talking to the deaf — also a splendid thing. Anyone who is sufficiently kind to do so will, I think, be astonished at the appreciation which his efforts beget, and may be rewarded by some delightful talk. What golden treasures of thought we have for those who will dig for them! And how simple are the rules. Very simple, yet very essential.

First, then, will you kindly remember that, as a rule, general conversation is

impossible. Most people not extremely deaf can enjoy one person if he has a well-placed voice with a clear enunciation, and if he will sit near by and not turn his head away when speaking. Very few deaf people, however, can talk to more than one person at a time. Exceptionally clever lip readers may sometimes do so, and, for a few, satisfactory ear phones may give back this lost pleasure. But for the vast majority a tête-à-tête is all that can be managed.

For this reason, if you see a deaf friend talking to one other person, leave the two alone. Do not be tempted, I implore you, to rush up and join in. The minute you do so your eager tongue sweeps the deaf talker straight out of the game. Neither should a third person toss irrelevant remarks into the tête-à-tête from time to time. That also breaks the pattern of the conversation as completely as a small boy's stone smashes a windowpane. Of course, when the inconsiderate person does this, the considerate one may interpret by simply repeating, or giving a hint as to the fresh subject. Conversation for us is much like a game of hare and hounds, the topic the hare, and we the hounds in hot pursuit. When it is snatched suddenly away to some unexpected subject, we are naturally thrown off the track. Remember the deaf old lady who, when the conversation had been about the songs of insects, but went off to the fine singing of the new vested choir, remarked, 'Yes, and they do it all with their hind legs.'

How long, I wonder, should deaf people be expected, for the sake of politeness, to sit and look on at colloquies out of which they have been swept? Conversations heard are usually interesting; merely looked at, they speedily become wearisome. How often have I sat thus, not hearing a word and eager to be off to a thousand and one other things, yet restrained by

politeness. No deaf person should require people to make him hear all the time; yet no hearing one should expect the deaf to sit for long periods entirely as spectators. Time is as valuable to us as to other people. A little understanding of this might make things easier all round. There are, of course, no hard and fast rules to be followed, but any family that wishes to consider its deaf member may easily work out some technique of its own.

There is one rule, however, that I wish indeed might become hard and fast forever. That is, do not make personal remarks before the deaf which you do not wish them to hear. Who would do such a rude thing? Plenty of people otherwise well bred do it constantly, and then remark smugly on the suspiciousness of the deaf. Who would n't be, under the circumstances! You may talk about a whatnot, a hassock, a pug dog, or even a very young child before its face, but a grown-up person, merely because his hearing is defective, is neither a piece of furniture, an animal, nor a young child, and to be treated as such is exasperating even to our sweet tempers. Besides being the height of rudeness, such remarks are rarely safe. Deaf ears occasionally hear unexpectedly well, as, for instance, in a loud noise. It is on record that a certain autocratic old Scotch lady, discovering that she heard better in a noise, had a small page stationed by her chair to beat a loud drum when visitors were present. It must have been startling to have some timid offering anent the weather played up thus, but at least it must have discouraged anyone from making remarks about that old lady before her face.

V

And now, having blown off a little steam on behalf of the deaf, let me turn with less effervescence to the deaf

themselves. A word in your ear phones, my friends!

I wish I had space to recount the history of the education of the congenitally deaf as it has developed through the years. Some of it is the oft-told tale of man's inhumanity to man; but more is the less-known saga, man's humanity to man. That, however, requires a whole article to itself. Suffice it to say here that science, my friends, is at last sitting up and taking notice of the needs of all varieties of impaired hearing. We in turn should sit up and take notice of what it has done for us.

I had a lesson in this not long since. For some foolish reason — inertia, shyness, vanity, or skepticism — I had never tried the ear phones with which some of the motion-picture theatres are now equipped. A few weeks ago, however, encouraged by a friend, I was given one of them at the box office. The usher plugged it into the seat. With but little hope I cocked it over one ear, when presto! in one instant every word of that play was pouring straight into my ear, absolutely clear and distinct, with nothing for me to do but sit and enjoy the performance. And all this hitherto lost pleasure might have been mine at any time within the last year or two had I not been too supine to do even that small amount of pioneering.

Of course no ear phone, whether of church and theatre or carried about on one's person, can ever be as good as a good ear. It is only somewhat better than a bad one. So let us not expect too much. It is true, also, that ear phones are harder to get used to than hearing people — those butterflies beside the road — realize. Nevertheless one should give them at least a trial, as well for one's self as for one's friends. The loss of sound is to some extent the loss of life, and no amount of sensitiveness, pride, inertia, or vanity

should be allowed to stand between us and all the life of which we are capable. If one does acquire a suitable hearing aid, what a delight it is to get back at least some sound to deaf ears — especially if those ears are one's own! The next best thing is for some other person to experience the same pleasure. I think we deaf people enjoy what we do hear more than does the normal person who takes all sound for granted. The other day in a rainstorm I sat in a car and was carried away with delight by the running patter of rain just over my head — and all for nothing! Not one penny did I pay, or could I have paid, for those raindrops. And just now, resting in my room, I enjoyed the click of a typewriter in the study, and two loud paternal sneezes from the back of the house.

VI

'Since language is the problem for the congenitally deaf, what, then, is the problem for those whose deafness comes later in life?' I ask next.

'Adjustment,' we are told.

Adjustment — oh yes, all summed up in one little word like that! Easy to say, yet how hard to accomplish! When I dipped my pen and thought to set forth some pat sentiments on the subject, truth and laughter rose up suddenly, and with their fixed stare upon me I can only confess that my own adjustment is in constant need of readjustment. At the long last it is a matter for each individual to solve for himself — one which, fortunately, he can solve better than anyone can solve it for him so long as he is not a moron or a jellyfish. Far be it, indeed, from me to pose as a law and a prophet for anyone, yet, with these reservations, I may offer a few humble suggestions.

First of all, then, let us face the fact of deafness, not attempting to conceal it either from ourselves or from others.

Because, up to a certain point, it may be hidden more easily than any of the other handicaps, there is the constant temptation to bluff. Also, as a rule, deafness creeps upon one rather slowly, so there is rarely any one moment of realization. For a long time one may almost hide it from one's self. Sooner or later, however, it will out, and it had better be soon than late. Personally I would rather have people know I am deaf than think I am rude, inattentive, or feeble-minded. And, since we make so many mistakes, think something they will, unless the truth is known.

I believe that most people who suffer this handicap are deafer than they realize, their friends often being more aware of it than they are. For this reason those who attempt to fool others are usually merely fooling themselves. Therefore, aside from the undesirability of living a lie, the attempt to do so is rarely successful. Yet how many are making that attempt at this moment — are endeavoring even to hide the fact from themselves, and so making it all the more difficult. An unpleasant situation evaded or run from will inevitably pursue after, leap upon the back, and ride like the Old Man of the Sea. But turn upon it, walk right up, look it straight in the eye, and behold what an immense relief is experienced. 'There, that's that! *Now* let's get on to other things,' you exclaim, discovering that all the energy expended in abortive flight may now be turned to creative adjustment.

In thus facing the inevitable we are not only serving ourselves, but others as well. Many people are so unhappy over their deafness that they cannot experience the relief of speaking of it unless someone else first blazes the way for them. Frank admission is the safest thing, also, since to pretend to hear when one has not heard may lead to disastrous consequences. We may per-

mit a good deal of conversation to go downstream, trusting that some chance word may presently offer a clue, but sometimes there are things which really must be heard. One deaf lady told me that a certain gentleman had to propose to her three times before she finally made out what he was up to. Probably at the third repetition his ardor had somewhat cooled, but how fortunate that she persisted in hearing, and was not tempted to answer 'Yes' or 'No' at random!

I heard of another lady, — gallant and charming, no doubt, but hardly so wise, — who, having discovered in her studies of lip reading that the word 'cake' is an impossible one to make out, since it is pronounced in the back of the throat with no motion whatever of either the lips or the tongue (Yes, dear readers, I hear you saying it over to yourselves to discover if I prevaricate!), decided to put down as 'cake' all words which she failed to understand. A cheerful conceit! But life is not all beer and skittles, nor are all lost words 'cake,' and I do not doubt she soon found herself in deep waters.

VII

This question of when to hear and when not to bother brings me around to my own experience, which I see, in my notes, I have hastily dashed down as 'The Problem of Oh.' This sounds mathematical, and indeed I have been letting 'oh' equal for me the unknown quantity. That is to say, after the third repetition of some remark which I have failed to hear, I have been prone to respond with a noncommittal 'Oh,' feeling it to be safer than a direct 'Yes' or 'No.' It is a good little ejaculation, and, murmured with a rising inflection, may cover a multitude of conversational blanks — but not all! I discovered it was tripping me when to some direct question, such as

'What is Gertrude Stein's theory?' or 'Are you for Roosevelt?' I had been responding with feeble-minded 'ohs' when I might have had much to say to both questions.

Having discovered, then, that even 'oh' is not safe, I have lately invented a slogan for myself, which is 'Listen.' 'Prick up the ear' might be even better. How I wish we could! A sudden pricked ear of attention would be much more effective in getting people to speak louder than any number of polite requests for repetitions.

Needless to say, for the deaf it is easier to talk than to listen. Nevertheless, for several reasons we should make all the effort we can to hear as much as possible. In the first place, although we cannot improve the actual condition of the ear, yet by being alert we can force into service all the hearing we have. Many of us, through inertia, are deafer than we need to be. Also, it is polite to listen, and the deaf should certainly be a little more polite than anyone else. If we are nuisances, — and very often we are! — much of that may be mitigated by a little extra courtesy on our part. And what is so courteous and so attractive to most people as an attentive ear — even a deaf one! Indeed, if we will keep pricked up all the ears we have, we may become better listeners than many a hearing person who is walled in behind such a barrage of his own talk that no outside word can penetrate. Again, this attempt to listen, backed by some genuine interest in what the other person is saying, may reap for us pleasant rewards. Not to do so may lose us a job. It did for one deaf lady, who talked so continuously in the endeavor to hide her deafness when being interviewed by a possible employer that he concluded she was merely trying to be coquettish, and so would have none of her.

Along with this need to listen as

acutely as possible goes the warning which I am constantly giving myself, to be careful as to what I repeat. Since we frequently hear incorrectly, we are in danger of passing on all sorts of inaccuracies if we are not circumspect.

Of course there are some people who 'simply cannot talk to the deaf.' Well, one must just laugh and let them go. Life is short, the world is wide, with an innumerable number of people in it, so why bother with the ones who cannot make us hear?

There are also certain times when it is especially difficult to hear — as, for instance, when eating food which crackles, like toast or lettuce. How often in company have I not asked myself, 'Shall I try to hear what the lady on my left is saying, or shall I eat that salad?' And how frequently — I blush to admit it! — the salad wins.

And now I have said a good deal and yet hardly touched upon some problems. What about pride, for instance? Some deaf people are crushed by their handicap because they are too proud to be helped. They themselves would give with the utmost readiness, but they will not receive. This is true also of proud hearing people. Well, it is a give-and-take world. It cannot be one-sided. If we refuse to receive, we deprive ourselves of the full privilege of giving.

And what have I to say of the problem of employment for the deaf? Very little, I fear. Yet, come to think of it, — and surely this is good news, — every single deaf person I can call to mind on the instant has a job if he wants one, and some have very good jobs indeed.

And speaking of jobs, whether paid or otherwise, let us not insult our deaf ears by offering them as excuses for shirking whatever responsibilities or opportunities of service come our way.

True, there are certain things which we cannot do, but there are many more which we can. The world is far more in need of a spirit of helpfulness than it is of perfect hearing, and there are more good deeds to be done than even the Boy Scouts can manage.

VIII

And now, having set out so confidently to write this paper, I find myself at its close with a feeling that I have somehow been inadequate to the task, leaving unsaid many of the most essential things. Perhaps I should try again, but I am tired of being merely my ears, since there is much more of me than that. Somewhat in the spirit of the adventurous goat on tour, who, according to a worried station master, 'had done et up where he was going to,' I also would fain eat my tag, forget that I am a deaf person, and get on with the interesting business of being alive in this very alive, human, fallible, but exciting world. Is not this the ideal for us all? To remember, and have our friends do likewise, that first of all we are human beings, and only secondarily handicapped ones?

Nevertheless, I would say one last word to those of us who are traveling this rocky road to Zion — at least I know it is a rocky road, and I have every hope and belief that it leads to a Zion of sorts. Especially I would speak to the young travelers among us; to those who, perhaps on the threshold of life, full of eagerness, zest, and desire, find themselves, as I did, checked and thwarted by failing ears. You are lonely and baffled. Pity is the last thing you want, but perhaps you would like some word from an older person who knows what you are facing. Well, I do know.

Are you a young woman, and do you sometimes rush off to your own room and shut the door fast in loneliness and

defeat, because you can no longer keep up with the crowd? I know; I understand.

Are you a young man, a lawyer perhaps, finding yourself constantly held up in your chosen profession because you have failed to hear something important — the nervous mumble, possibly, of some witness? I know about that also, though only vicariously.

And I know the many other difficult phases of the problem. But do not think I am a will-o'-the-wisp leading you astray into a bog of self-pity. On the contrary, I am stressing the hard aspects, of which you are already fully aware, because I have an enormous belief in the hardihood of human nature. No, not a mere belief; an absolute confidence that, because you are a human being, you can stand truth rather than rose-water fiction, and a further certainty that on the very hardness of the facts you can rise triumphant and make the world your own. What is better than to know the worst, and yet find in our make-up something capable of facing it, of wresting victory out of disaster?

Why physical affliction is in the world — or any affliction, for that matter — I cannot say; whether it is here of design or has crept in through some mischance, I know not; whether it is a good or a bad thing, who can say? But this I do know: humanity is not to be chained, but, through the divine gift of inspiration, may rise gloriously above adversity. And I believe that when this is done, somehow, somewhere, a great hidden purpose is served, the whole tide of human courage is raised a little higher if only by one drop. And all creation moves a fraction nearer to some 'far-off divine event.' Perhaps it is the privilege of the handicapped to serve in this especial way. So three cheers for us, and for the adventure! Play up, play up, and play the game!

SUFFOLK WITH A PORPOISE

BY GLANVILLE SMITH

I

WHEN someone goes somewhere, as we have learned in *Alice in Wonderland*, he should have a porpoise. When I went to Suffolk, I had a porpoise — in fact I had two: one led me to the haunts of Edward FitzGerald the letter writer, who also translated Omar, and the other to a forgotten countryside once the demesne of Ranulph de Glanville, who, in addition to being a very great man in his own time, — the twelfth century, — has the distinction of being my ancestor, though there is no record of his having plumed himself upon this. He was a very busy man, just as FitzGerald was an idle one, and since both of them died before I was born they were not interested in me at all, but I have long been interested in them, and so they gave me my porpoise when I went to Suffolk.

Now when you travel without a porpoise you are likely to find yourself in some such place as Miami or the Sistine Chapel, where there are hundreds of other people also without porpoises. Of course I would not belittle Miami, which justly boasts more neon-light advertising than any other city of its size in the world, nor the Sistine Chapel, which is famous for several excellent reasons. But the people that throng these famous places are very distracting; certainly the Sistine Chapel is lost sight of in the wonder of observing all these American boys in golf knickers, English boys in blazers, and German

boys in *Lederhosen*, who cumber the altar steps, as well as the incessant army of invading women tourists for the most part in fancy dress, and hardly anybody with a porpoise. But when you travel with a porpoise it is likely to take you to places not so notoriously picturesque, or famous, or popular.

There are not many porpoises to take travelers to Suffolk. It is a county untrodden. The ardent Pickwickians do go to Ipswich, to the White Horse, where their hero by mistake got into the room of the lady with the yellow curl-papers, but their numbers cannot be very great. And Dickens can hardly be said to have commended that inn; the picture of the fat waiter with 'a fortnight's napkin under his arm' did not lure me, though I am fond of *Pickwick*. No, I went right on to Woodbridge, feeling very excited.

II

I was really a very green traveler. I had never before been out of my native land, but now I had been in London a month and had got rather used to it. In London I had disembarked gingerly from my boat, but now the problem was to know how to leave. The prospect of taking a railway journey was terrifying. In the theatres I had booked stalls, but what did one do in an English railway train? To ease this perplexity I went a day ahead to Liverpool Street Station and heard

what people asked for, and saw what they did, and what English railway carriages looked like, and then next day at the appointed hour, with my porpoises to nerve me to it, rat-tat-tat I entered briskly, got my ticket, boarded the train, and rode off without anybody guessing, I hope, what a really green traveler I was.

It was early April, daffodil time, and presently I was riding across Essex, seeing Constable landscapes. Then I caught a glimpse of old King Cole's capital, Colchester. Then the train made a loop around one side of Ipswich, the goal of the Pickwickians, and then I began to grow very excited, because I now was really in Suffolk, and must soon get off and be confronted by a new set of problems difficult for a green traveler to solve, and then very quickly I was in Woodbridge.

Woodbridge is not a tourist haunt, but it is really very pleasant. It has a river, several views, a good church, and the obligatory number of half-timber houses. And up and down every street and out every road into the Suffolk countryside the thread of FitzGerald associations goes winding. He was born, lived almost his whole life, died, and was buried, all within a few miles of the station platform on which I anxiously stood with my heavy suitcase pulling me lopsided. But it was sunset time, and before I could follow any threads of this kind I had to find a home for myself.

I stopped at the Crown. The Bull was the inn where FitzGerald's friends stopped, but I did not know that, so I stopped at the Crown. Being a green traveler, I did not guess how good an inn I had chosen, but when the boots went about the parlor twitching the flowered curtains across the windows when the lights were lit, and I heard ladies and gentlemen talking of horses in voices wonderfully melodious over their whiskey-and-sodas after a day's riding,

sitting about the fire, I winked at myself in the nearest mirror, for I felt very good.

After dinner my porpoise led me to the bar-parlor. This was a small room with a large bulge on one side of it which was a bow window facing into the coach yard. I sat in the bulge, the bar was across the room, and all the paneling was very old, worn, and brown, just as it should be. Presently somebody learned that I was interested in FitzGerald. This seemed to create a pleasant impression. The peaceful toppers who sat with me in the bulge crossed their legs over the other knee and fell to reminiscing. Of course FitzGerald has been dead fifty years, so the reminiscences were perhaps not very fresh, but one old man remembered how the poet, who must certainly have looked very solemn in his shawl and stovepipe hat which he wore even when sailing, would come out from London after one of his rare visits there, and be met by the carriage from Boulge Hall with the FitzGerald arms painted on the door, and a coachman and footman. FitzGerald would greet the servants very courteously, and have his luggage put in the carriage, whereupon the coachman and footman would drive away smartly while he, the translator of Omar, tramped home in his shawl and stovepipe hat, through the twilight and the gravel. Such talk was just what I had been hoping for. I have been a devoted, not to say loving reader of the FitzGerald letters ever since I first learned to know them; a scrap of scribbling dated at Woodbridge and closing 'Ever yrs, E.F.G.' is bound to be delightful; and for this reason it was certainly exciting for a green traveler like myself to be sitting in a Woodbridge bar-parlor hearing an old man reminisce on such a subject.

It was early April, daffodil time, and I, born a rangy Westerner, had been a

month in London, so next morning early I put on my new tweed suit, of which I was very proud, and made for the country. Everybody knows about the English countryside, how it is combed and washen, and here I was actually in it. And best of all, the names of places were full of meaning.

I had an ordnance map, and with its expert help I soon found myself looking at Bredfield House, where FitzGerald was born. It was a noble Jacobean house beyond a noble lawn. The lawn had just been brushed; it was banded with stripes ten feet broad alternately plain and satiny green, according to which way the brush had bent the grass blades on its slow trips toward the house or back toward the road. I had never seen anything of that kind before. Then I went on to Boulge churchyard, where FitzGerald is buried. It is a small churchyard with a small church in it, at the edge of a wood, with no village to be seen. Though it was fine enough April weather to bring the daffodils into blossom, the Persian rose, scion of the rose that blooms by Omar's grave, planted at the head of this English grave, was not even in leaf. But I knew what it was; and then, looking about at the simple, quiet, hidden landscape, I thought it was a fit last resting place for a man so shy.

Next I came back to the park gate, for in a cottage there by the gate FitzGerald lived until his middle age. He seemed to find it more agreeable to live, not with his family at the Hall, but by the gate. The cottage, though of only one story, is really not small; being a green traveler, I did not presume to go in, but looked at it very gratefully from the road. Some certainly very perfect letters were written under that roof, and even better ones were written about it from London by its homesick absentee. For its garden he bought 'anemone roots which in the Spring

shall blow Tyrian dyes, and Irises of a newer and more brilliant prism than Noah saw in the clouds'; and when a storm struck the city he thought of the cottage, and how his housekeeper 'with red arms and face of woe will haul in the struggling windows.' And here it was that, as choirmaster, he did his sole public job in all that long idle life: with chalk and blackboard he taught the farmer boys to sing bass to the farmer girls' soprano. Or he would play Händel on the organ for his own fun; or read, as Agnes Repplier has pointed out, only the things he really enjoyed, in the most obstinate way; or he would go walking with his Skye terrier, in the shawl and stovepipe hat; or tramp off to eat toasted cheese with his cronies Crabbe (son of the poet), Bernard Barton the Quaker poet, and Churchyard. These were the 'Woodbridge Wits,' and they had a glorious time talking pictures, for one thing; for Churchyard and FitzGerald especially bought Titians, Gainsboroughs, and Old Cromes, or what they imagined to be works by these masters, and retouched and varnished them in the most reckless style. And then he was always tinkering at some literary enterprise or other, and always dissatisfied with what he did. All these things the name Boulge and the cottage by the park gate brought very vividly to mind.

III

But it was now past lunch time, and since Boulge seemed to be a region rather than any village with an inn in it, a kind of sub-porpoise led me to a near-by place, Grundisburgh, which name had no meaning for me, but at any rate it was a big enough village to have an inn. Now I was a green traveler, and had an idea that all English villages must be charming, which supposition later was thoroughly blasted, so when I came down upon Grundis-

burgh I supposed it must be quite the usual thing because it was so charming. It was hid away in a crease in the general plateau, and was built around a large open grassy square across which a brook went winding. As I came into the village I passed a half-timber house in a garden, like a house in a fairy story. It looked like things I had seen in books, and I knew it was a good one, but I did not guess that in all my wanderings I should never find another so fine. Nor when I looked up at the angels carved in the church roof trusses, and at the carved rood screen whose saints still glowed with the wax colors of mediæval days, did I guess that I was admiring beauty I should not find matched elsewhere. I enjoyed these things deeply, but I took them rather for granted, and supposed I should find finer things in more famous places; besides, what I really wanted now was lunch.

I prowled quietly into the Black Dog, feeling very bashful; but I was welcomed, and seated in a corner by the fire in a paneled room. Every angle on the old woodwork had been rounded down by years of wear, and in this setting an American like myself must have looked very new. In fact I was treated as a novelty. The innkeeper, a coarse horsy man, his hard-working thin wife, a carter in gaiters, and a miscellaneous elderly toper with a red face, gathered around and made my lunch a social affair. They had only seen one American before: he was a soldier who had told them very plainly that they were fifty years behind the times in Grundisburgh. This had made a deep impression on them, and they had admired him very much, because he obviously viewed them from a higher plane; however, they had not followed any of the advice he had offered for their improvement.

They asked me about America; I asked about FitzGerald. Everybody

was ready to be friendly. 'You have a very odd-looking ring,' said the innkeeper's wife when she had supplied me with cold beef and mustard pickles, bread and ale. 'Might I have a look at it if you will be so kind?' Her husband recited a poem containing words usually heard only in male conversation of the freer sort, but she seemed used to it. The carter inquired if I knew anything of his nephew who had emigrated and gone to Detroit. Nothing had been heard from him now for three years. 'Probably took off by one of them Mississippi floods,' the carter sighed. The old toper nodded and winked, but said nothing until I was ready to leave, when he stood up and announced: 'The next war will be fought in the air.'

This was all very genuine and pleasant. Later, when in the tourist haunts I was treated as a kind of commodity, profitable if handled tactfully, I saw what a green traveler I had been in Grundisburgh, to take all that spontaneous kindness for granted.

IV

Meanwhile, Woodbridge remained for me to explore. I did this, and I found myself very happy at it, because to a reader of the FitzGerald letters that peaceful market town was full of meaning.

At the plateau-top outskirts of it stands Farlingay Hall, a pleasant farmhouse in the style of the Regency. Here FitzGerald had rooms after he left Boulge, and was waited upon by 'a Maidservant who, as she curtsies of a morning, lets fall the Tea-pot'; here he entertained Carlyle, who came out to discuss the battlefield of Naseby with him, for Carlyle was writing his history of Cromwell, and the FitzGeralds owned the ground on which the battle had been fought. The friendship of Carlyle with FitzGerald is one of the

gentle items in the life of that volcanic philosopher; somehow he could not resent FitzGerald's 'innocent *far niente* life,' though it was of the pattern that commonly provoked his most violent eruptions. There was an integrity about this idleness that disarmed him. If anybody ever brought quiet to his torn Scotch soul, FitzGerald did. The best instance of this was that evening when they sat in the dressing room under the roof of the house in Chelsea, smoking, and looking out 'on nursery gardens, their almond trees in blossom, and beyond, bare walls of houses, and over these, roofs and chimnies, and roofs and chimnies, and here and there a steeple, and whole London crowned with darkness gathering behind like the illimitable resources of a dream.' Farlingay Hall was the scene of one of the early chapters in that friendship, an ample, clean, plain sort of place, and Carlyle enjoyed his stay there. On my travels I many times found the very house in which, of all places, I should like best to live the rest of my life, and Farlingay was one of them.

Woodbridge's market square ascends a hill, and on one slant side over a shop — now a plumber's, as I recall — FitzGerald next lived. And presently he built a house of his own in Woodbridge, at twice the expense intended, just as houses are built nowadays; this was Little Grange, and in it he lived until he died. It is a solid brick house, and was at its best only when full of nieces; in general I think FitzGerald really did not like it very much, for nothing ever quite suited him so well as the snugness of his cottage at the Boulge park gate. But it was his own, and he liked that, and would sign himself 'The Laird of Littlegrange' when he wrote to Fanny Kemble.

But there is more of FitzGerald in Woodbridge than is contained in these three dwelling places. A hairdresser's

window reminded me of the china head he paused to inspect while it patiently revolved on its little stand to show off the latest thing in wigs. Or a malt-fragrant door put me in mind of how 'three weeks ago such floods came, that an old woman was carried off as she was retiring from a beer house about 9 p.m., and drowned' — could this have been the door from which that old sinner, despite her punctuality, was carried to a watery reward? And the River Deben at the foot of the town speaks very plainly of FitzGerald and his boat the *Scandal*, for it is populated with sails to this day. Across it is a hill shaggy with old trees, and down the estuary he often went, in his shawl and stovepipe hat, reading Sophocles, and doling out the grog to his crew, for that was the only work this idler ever did on his boat. Here as elsewhere I suspect it was diffidence rather than any real laziness that made him so idle. He was persuaded that others could work the sails better than he, and so he hired them to do it.

The very post office in Woodbridge is an object of veneration. Post offices should be useful rather than venerable, of course, but such a conflux of literary jewels has been gathered into and distributed from this one that it is glorious to think of. Through it went not only FitzGerald's letters to his friends when he was at home, or came his letters to the Woodbridge Wits when he was away, but also the shining company of Lamb's letters to Bernard Barton.

Barton, as I have already said, was a Quaker, a poet, and one of the Woodbridge Wits. He was also a clerk in a bank. He wrote a letter to Lamb about this; he had had a small but encouraging success as a poet, and now he begged advice: should he throw up the tedious clerkship and devote himself to the Muse? Lamb's reply, which shot back immediately through this post

office, is a classic. 'Throw yourself rather, my dear sir, from the steep Tarpeian rock, slapdash headlong upon iron spikes!' he urged in a panic. 'Keep to your bank, and the bank will keep you. I bless every star that Providence, not seeing good to make me independent, has seen it next good to settle me upon the stable foundation of Leadenhall. Henceforth I retract all my fond complaints of mercantile employment; look upon them as lovers' quarrels. I was but half in earnest. Welcome dead timber of a desk, that makes me live!' Lord Byron, through this same post office, had already given similar advice to the bank clerk, and before the weight of such unanimity he retired again into unambition and achieved, not fame as a poet, but immortality as the recipient of letters from Lamb and in his older days from FitzGerald. Even to have toasted cheese with the Woodbridge Wits is an enviable, if minor, immortality.

Through this same post office, seemingly so humdrum, came FitzGerald's letter from his three most famous friends, Carlyle, Tennyson, Thackeray; and through it came and went that choice literary correspondence linking England with New England, his letters to and from James Russell Lowell and Professor Norton of Harvard. To its door came running young Hallam Tennyson, breathless to catch the post, for his father, a visitor at Little Grange, had seen in a newspaper a remark falsely attributed to him which he knew must give offense to his friend Longfellow, and had sat down immediately to write him a letter exposing the falsity of the report. Yet no plaque has been affixed to this building, and no *char-à-bancs* paused before it while a dozen tourist cameras were focused, that morning when I paid it a devoted call. All the same, it is a shrine, and I was glad my porpoise had led me to it.

V

My second porpoise now began to tug me, so after I had sent my heavy suitcase ahead to Yarmouth, which is in Norfolk, I set off seaward, toward Butley, Orford, and Leiston, for the region in which those forgotten towns lie was the demesne of Ranulph de Glanville, who was a truly great man. As an ancestor he leaves little to be desired. He was rich, he was powerful, he was an earl, he was Lord Chief Justice, he was High Sheriff of Yorkshire, he was regent during the absences of the King, he wrote the first book on English law, he founded a priory, he founded a monastery, and, to top all off, he died heroically as a Crusader before the walls of Acre. His King, Henry II, had a great deal of trouble: he was accused by the Church of the murder of Thomas à Becket, and William the Lion of Scotland was pestering him in the north with bloody raids. But in the very hour of Henry's public penance at Canterbury, William the Lion was captured, and Ranulph de Glanville was his captor. When the news of this capture came to the King, in delight he jumped out of his bed, and ever after was a firm believer in the efficacy of penance, because the reward for his had been so prompt. The captor also got some credit, but he was already a great and successful man.

The only unsuccessful that is chalked against the earl in history was his failure to quell the anti-Jewish riots that disgraced the coronation of Richard Cœur de Lion. Jew baiting then, as in more recent centuries, was too popular an enthusiasm to be put down by any abstract appeals to the mob's sense of justice, and the soldiers under his command were really more interested in securing their share of the pillage than in maintaining the peace; and for these reasons matters went from bad to worse, until the pogrom of York

marked the culmination of that horror, when the remaining Jews, barricaded, slit their own throats and let the last survivor burn down the house upon their heaps of bleeding corpses. It was a vigorous age, something like our own. In the main, however, Ranulph de Glanville played his part of ancestor to perfection, perhaps even too well, for none of the now innumerable army of his descendants has ever equaled that mediæval model, and this discouragement persists to the present day.

But if I cannot equal I can at least admire the largeness of his life, and for a sign of this I set off toward Butley, with a pack on my back in which the soap in its soap dish knocked merrily. It was early April and the daffodils were in blossom, and when I got out upon the heaths the whins were blossoming no less yellowly, and smelled like coconut. I was now in an English countryside that was not of the usual book kind. Perhaps it was washen, but certainly not combed. It was ragged and desolate, and the villages that once in a great while rose before me were warts appropriate to the rough surface of those forgotten parishes. The weather, too, came into key; the sea winds and the mists they drove suited the desolation only too well. However, I was young and footloose and the soap in my soap dish did rattle very gayly, and so even when it began to rain I did not mind much, but tramped steadfastly along the paths that laced the heaths, and thought how pleasant it would be to take mine ease in mine inn, when I got to it. But when I got to Butley, the Oyster was full; laborers had been brought into the district to attempt reforestation, and they filled all the rooms. Stopping in an Oyster did not have much appeal on so raw an afternoon anyhow, so I went another way to Boyton. The Bell at Boyton, too, was full. This was alarming. I was sent to the postmistress, who wrung her

hands in despair over my plight, but still she could not help me, since her spare bedroom was promised to some travelers to come late that night. But then she thought of Valley Farm and directed me to it.

Her directions were perhaps not very good, or my memory of them was inaccurate, for I wandered a great way from the right road, growing more and more perplexed. The rain now had taken on an earnest long-suffering character, and dark was falling, so at the next house which looked pleasant I went up the walk and knocked. Immediately the door was opened by a lady who had obviously been watching my approach. Behind her in the hall was tier upon tier of glass bells with stuffed birds inside them.

'Is this Valley Farm?' I inquired, striving to remove the cap which the wet had shrunk up about my brows.

'No,' she replied. Sure enough, it was on a hill, as I now noticed.

The lady looked amused; I imagine I resembled a caricature of Undine risen from her fountain. But even a caricature, when driven to it, can be audacious. I begged the lady for a bed for the night. At this she looked more amused than ever, and by way of answer gave me plain directions to Valley Farm. Then she shut herself up firmly with her stuffed birds and left me outside in the rain. I felt a very green traveler indeed. Also, the water was running down inside my collar. But I marched off haughtily, as if some unseen band were playing 'The Stars and Stripes Forever,' and sure enough, though as much dead as alive, I got to Valley Farm at last.

The house had a tumble-down air, but there was an arch in the middle of the front of it, and a very broad door, and when the door opened and I said but one word I was taken in, and was at Home.

After the purgatory of dark and

cold and wet and homelessness, the heaven that had opened to take me in seemed certainly very heavenly, and my thoughts of Valley Farm are tender and thankful to this day, even though my friends the Birds no longer live there. There was a fire with hobs and a tea-kettle. There were two boys of my own age who rose to greet me in great kindness but without making any fuss. There were a pair of dogs who put their chins on my knees for comfort. And then there was my hostess, a little lively body, whose father (for we learned everything of importance about one another before we went to bed) had been one of those eccentric and dashing Irishmen who seem after all actually to have existed outside the pages of Charles Lever. Her mother had been a Frenchwoman. In fact she was lively, and not suited to the rural life in a forgotten Suffolk parish; the lady of the stuffed birds thought she was daffy; and so the meteoric (if damp) arrival of a being like myself from out the immeasurable spaces of the New World suited her fancy to a T.

We all had a delightful time and have been friends by letter ever since. There was dinner, mainly a suet dish, formidable, I at first feared, beyond my powers of assimilation. The pie, too, was a study. But I was in no mood to quibble over unfamiliar foods; the cane bottom of an old chair, in cream sauce, I could have munched down without dismay. After dinner we put on overcoats — one was kindly lent me — and went into the parlor. Here candles were lit on an ebony piano which was blue with cold, Douglas played, and we sang hymns, 'God Bless the Prince of Wales,' and other old favorites. The dogs were curled up on music plentifully strewn on the floor, and our pianist now and again blew on his fingers to draw the blood back into them so that he could proceed. I was feeling very happy, and quite forgot

how close the dark and the wet were pressed against the windows. Then we went back into the warm dining room and had more tea and more talk, for we still did not know everything of importance about one another, and we were all very impatient to do this. Then I was put to bed in an immense spotless glacial bedroom, where I lay in peace too sweet to make even slumber seem inviting after that long day. I was a green traveler, all right, but I knew that I was a lucky one, because I had come among friends.

VI

It was partly the fault of my porpoise, but also owing to the fact that it was that get-up-and-go season, spring, that next day I left Valley Farm, where the daffodils were blossoming in a riot all through the juicy grass, and went back to Butley. Of Butley Priory only a gatehouse remained for me to see, with more coats of arms in a checkerwork over the great arch than you could conveniently shake a stick at. The Birds had told me that it was now owned by a Cambridge professor, who tutored students there during the vacations. There were some students on the premises that day, looking elegant, but thinking more likely of cricket or the binomial theorem than of old Ranulph de Glanville, founder of the house.

I went on, and by night was established in Orford. I liked this town very well. It was once an important place, but it is important no longer, in fact it is very small and forgotten; if Horace Walpole had not taken his title, Earl of Orford, from it, few Americans would ever hear of the place. Walpole never saw it so far as I know; it was not central enough to suit the Great Gossip; and its castle, though curious, is pre-Gothic, and very military, rather than any medley of turrets and tra-

ceries in the style Walpole admired and revived to fashion. Still the mere title, Earl of Orford, connects another great letter writer with Suffolk, and this pleased me. And then I liked Orford anyhow, with its beetling seven-sided castle on a mound, and the church from which the tower long ago tumbled down in a high sea wind, and its irregular market square lying between the two old monuments.

The inn was as pleasant as the weather was bad, so I stayed there, in a parlor which, since it opened off the landing, was like the little boy in the poem, neither upstairs nor down. Here I read peacefully by a sea-coal fire, wondering indifferently at the odd smell of the place until I saw that it was my shoe soles that were smoking, and that they had curled back extremely. What a green traveler to have put his only shoes in such jeopardy on a walking trip! But I consoled myself with jam tarts, baked by the two sisters who ran the inn. They brought them in in plattersful and I ate a great many. And a cobbler below the church pounded in a few nails when I showed him my shoes' misfortune, and they served very well after all. The cobbler also favored me with the story, which is certainly very old, of the wild man the Orford fishermen once took in their nets: he was covered with prickles and knew no language, and though he was unmercifully tortured for his own good he never seemed to grasp the principles of Christianity, which all agreed were the first thing he should be taught, but instead escaped back into the sea; and here is at least one old story with a happy ending.

VII

Next day I bid adieu with some emotion to Orford and its jam tarts and set off toward Leiston. First I followed a road, then a track, and then a path which led me into several cow yards in

those black bottom lands. And then I followed nothing at all. It was a misty day, with the black field furrows glistening with moisture and the distant trees like processions of half-seen spirits; and all at once I heard overhead what I at once knew must be a skylark. Since I was such a green traveler, this certainly upset me. Scraps of poetry came into my poor noddle, and I felt very uneasy as if I might cry, but of course I did not permit myself anything so absurd, but went on. Presently I climbed a dike by the River Alde, and instantly a boatman jumped into his boat from the distant bank and rowed over to fetch me. He had rings in his ears and was young and hearty, and obviously was some character out of a book. Then, after a walk down the seashore, I got to Aldeburgh.

Aldeburgh was the poet Crabbe's town. An interest in Crabbe has been revived lately. He was a realist, they say, but I must admit I have never read a line by him, even though he was admired in the days of his darkest eclipse by no less a critic than Fitzgerald. Aldeburgh I did not think much of, and Leiston beyond it, my goal, though smaller, was even a duller place.

Next day, however, I was cheered by my visit to Leiston Abbey. This foundation, for a wonder, has returned to the use intended for it by the old earl, at least in part. It has no brotherhood, no vows, no splendid ritual; but if you, a lay person, are looking for a retreat where you can compose your thoughts among ruined but now well-kept ecclesiastical walls, where, as Henry Adams said, you can wash out the dirty creases which life is making in the corners of your soul's eyes, why — 'communicate with the . . . etc., etc., etc.' and Leiston may take you in. The monks' old chapel was immense. The space it occupied, now surrounded by ragged walls grown up in wallflowers

and ivy, is a lawn with walks and beds of flowers, and in one end of it is a farmhouse, now housing those few persons who have time to wash the dirt out of the creases of their souls' eyes, and at the other end is a small and (it must be said) very ugly chapel. Luckily the chapel is temporary. I wish I were rich enough to build a good one; no doubt my ancient sire would applaud in Heaven the continuance of Glanville patronage in that ancient place.

VIII

So far my Glanville porpoise led me in that part of the world. But now my FitzGerald porpoise resumed control, for I determined to go on to Dunwich, where FitzGerald had done some of his best idling in the days of his old age.

On the way I came through Theberton, where, FitzGerald tells, barrels of Hollands were found hidden behind the church altar cloth during the many other excitements of the Napoleonic Wars. At Theberton, Doughty, author of the *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, was born. A landscape more un-Arabian would be hard to imagine, for this was England in early April when the daffodils were blossoming in great style, and the new grass was certainly very green.

Then over heaths houseless and untrodden, and neither washen nor combed, with only the echoes of my own footsteps to break the great silence, and the knocking of the soap in the soap dish, I got by nightfall to Dunwich, where an enormous maid-servant puffed in and out setting the table for my supper in a minute rooming place. Nobody knew whether or not it was there that FitzGerald had stayed when he came to do his Dunwich idling, but the priory walls on the hill above marked the course of his favorite walk; the sadness of the place seemed

to take the old man's fancy, that city of slow destruction, eaten into year after year by the waves until now only a village of a dozen houses remains. After FitzGerald was to come another poet, Swinburne, to write in dark stanzas of that town and its churchyard eaten by the sea, of

Tombs, with bare white piteous bones protruded,
Shroudless, down the loose collapsing banks....
Graves where hope and prayer and sorrow
 brooded
Gape and slide and perish, ranks on ranks.

In our day the last skeleton has been eaten by the sea, and the church — choir, nave, tower, and all — has been devoured, and the site of that tragedy is racing North Sea water.

Dunwich is a place to breed melancholy, but FitzGerald loved it, and as an old man after a sojourn there he wrote to Lowell: 'I have at last bid Adieu to poor old Dunwich: the Robin singing in the ivy that hangs on those old Priory walls. A month ago I wrote to ask Carlyle's Niece about her Uncle, and telling her of this Priory, and how her Uncle would once have called me Dilettante; all which she read to him; he only said "Poor, Poor old Priory!"'

Next day I walked the shore to Southwold, and rode to Yarmouth, and so left Suffolk, and I have never been back, though now I have more porpoises than ever to lead me there. But I have news of the county from my friends the Birds. When they left Valley Farm, which was not theirs after all, but only a rented place, and moved to town, Mrs. Bird put on her hat and went to the Woodbridge post office and had an interview. She told them that to forestall any errors in delivery she just wanted to let them know that she was 'expecting a letter from Minnesota in daffodil time.' And sure enough I wrote one, and she got it.

THE BROOK

BY BRADFORD K. DANIELS

I

I OFTEN tried to trace the Brook (it had no other name) to its source; but I always failed. Perhaps, after all, I really did not care to solve that alluring mystery of my childhood, to find in the primeval forest the first thread-like trickle from under a moss-covered stone deep in perpetual twilight, or slender pencil of silver reaching down from a fern-clad bank. I shall never trace it now except in fancy; for Time and Circumstance, those twin fates that preside over the destinies of men, have placed a continent between me and that about which all my boyhood life revolved.

The Brook had its origin somewhere in the forest-covered slope of the South Mountain; hurried breathlessly from one granite basin to the next until it reached the Valley; wound capriciously for a couple of miles through alder and willow land; and at last joined a river with mud banks as sleek as the sides of some huge, overfed beast. The river carried the water of the Brook on past wide marshes and out through a gap in a mountain wall to the sea, to my child's fancy a fearsome place of shipwrecks, spouting whales, and violent storms, the echo of which sometimes thrilled me on still winter nights as I lay awake in bed, listening to the faint, resurgent thunder of the surf.

My first attempt to follow the Brook into the forest was on a spring day when trout bit well and the alder catkins were powdered like golden bees.

Standing guard on the first shelf of granite rock above the lowland, over which water fell in a greenish veil, was a hackmatack (Micmac for tamarack), whose roots clutched octopus-like at the shallow soil. Its sparse evergreen foliage, touched with the spring, rose above me like thin smoke. In the bottom of the pool below were skeletons of last year's dead leaves, through which mica from disintegrated granite tantalized me with its suggestion of gold.

Bait, in the form of angleworms, I kept in the left-hand pocket of my jacket. I always started with a generous supply, for a good many of them crawled out. My fishing pole was a peeled willow rod forked at the end, to keep the line in place; the sinker was made of lead I had melted down from bullets flattened against iron targets on the rifle range of the militia. The hook had a real eye in the end, not one of those things with a stamped head that slipped through the most ingenious knot I could tie in the line every time I hooked a big one. I always carried an extra hook caught in the front of my jacket; and when I needed it I simply jerked it out, tearing small holes in the cloth until it looked moth-eaten — an appearance which greatly puzzled my mother.

I got down on my hands and knees and peered into the pool for signs of fish. I baited my hook with a black-headed worm fat as an alderman,

and cautiously lowered it over the side of the bank. Is there any joy for the small boy quite equal to the first tug on a fishing pole? Kingdoms may rise and fall, but the eternal boy will still be thrilled by a 'bite,' just as he was ten thousand years ago when he used a bone hook and a strip of bark for a line.

The trout I landed lacked the plumpness and bright coloring of those I caught in the sunny pools farther downstream. It wriggled from the hook and fell among dead leaves, which stuck to its sides until it wore a rustic coat of brown. I always carried my fish on a forked hazel branch (it did not split easily at the crotch), slipping one prong through a gill slit; so this weedy specimen was added to a half-dozen others, already dry and wrinkled from exposure to the wind and sun.

As I moved into the forest, the stillness awed me a little. This brook seemed puny, subdued, compared with the bustling fellow who hurried over the stones among the alders and willows. I wound my line about my fishing pole, and, stepping into the cold water, skirted a ledge of granite. In an open space stood a great hemlock with a dark stain halfway up its side, about which bees were clustering. I had chanced upon a bee tree; but I was not the first to discover it, for cut deep into the bark were grooves left by the sharp claws of a bear that had climbed it in search of honey.

A few rods farther on, I came upon a mark in the mud that sent shivers down my spine. I knew it at once for a bear track, and was ready to run, when I spied something white under a spruce bush. Curiosity overcame fear, and I pulled out from under the bush the fresh pelt of a sheep, neatly rolled into a ball. My father had complained about bears killing our sheep, and here was proof of it. The partly eaten body I found not far away. So bruin skinned

his mutton before he ate it, and rolled up the pelt!

The sound of breaking twigs made me leap like a frightened rabbit, and the next moment I was off in headlong flight. I slipped on a moss-covered log and fell, my fish flying in one direction and my pole in another. In a few moments I was just a wild thing fleeing in sheer animal panic. To my child's fancy there was a bear lurking behind every bush, and the one who had recently dined on mutton was in hot pursuit.

II

After this unfortunate adventure, dreams of exploring the Brook to its origin died down for a time; but they gradually revived, usually in autumn when the lure of the flaming mountain side and beechnuts pattering down from frosted husks was upon me. I had heard vaguely of the wonders of the wilderness that lay beyond: great antlered moose that splashed about among the lily pads along the margins of lakes set deep in the forest; beavers that built dams across streams and slapped the sealing mud down with their tails (had n't old Bushby Dow heard the slapping all one night when he was lost in the woods?); loons that dived so fast that the shot from a gun never reached them before they were under the water, and that laughed like crazy squaws — whatever that was like.

Slowly and with many heartbreaking mistakes I had made myself a pair of snowshoes. I had bent the bows out of green ash cut from the precious second growth in a clearing at the top of the mountain. From this grove the Indians used to pilfer wood for baskets and axe handles, and then sell them to my father, who grumbled at paying for his own property, but bought them just the same. The laces I had patiently cut with my jackknife from an

old buffalo robe once used by my grandfather in his sleigh.

I am not sure how long I had been toying with the idea, but one night when the snow sparkled as if it were alive I came to the great decision. Next day I would travel on my snowshoes to the source of the Brook, and build a log cabin there. I would chop down the necessary trees with my new axe, the first one I had ever owned. For days I had tried to put an edge on it 'sharp enough to shave with,' for that was what every logger boasted he could do with his axe. Having no beard to try the axe on, I pulled hairs out of my dog's back; but I never could cut one in two.

Following the Brook in winter when the leaves were off and the logs and stones buried deep under the snow was a new experience. I had no fear of bears now, for I knew they were fast asleep in their dens, sucking their paws. Bushby Dow assured me that he had once caught one in the very act.

The greater part of the Brook was now arched over with snow; but I could hear it talking to itself as if it were pleased with its warm blanket. Here and there the snow had fallen in, and I looked down at the water slipping along over the pebbles just as it did in the summer time. At each little fall the twigs of the near-by bushes were encased in ice, which clinked as the water swayed the submerged lower branches. In the trees high overhead blue jays sang shrill pæans, woodpeckers with scarlet crests pounded on dead trunks with a sound that was startling in the brooding stillness.

In sheer delight, I sat down on a log to watch a couple of chickadees swinging under a branch, their headdress suggesting an old lady's lace cap. Over there at the foot of that granite wall I would build my log house: I was too tired from trudging through the deep snow to follow the Brook any farther.

Perhaps the snow would bury it so deep that I should have to crawl out of a hole in the roof, just as one of my forbears was obliged to do when the first Puritan settlers came to the Valley.

I had taken off my jacket and woolen mittens, and was about to spit on my hands man-fashion for a good grip on the axe handle, when the swish of a branch froze me in my tracks. Climbing cautiously to the top of the cliff, I saw before me the thing I had so often longed to see. I knew him at once for an old bull moose; but he was twice as large as I had pictured him. He seemed all shoulders and head as he gathered the maple twigs under his long, wobbly upper lip, drew the branch down to him, and then let it swing back after he had clipped off the twigs with his chisel-like teeth. All about, the snow was trodden down and the lovely striped moosewood eaten off. I forgot all about my cabin, and watched the old fellow as he shambled about his yard until the blue shadows on the snow under the trees warned me that night was not far off. I had no desire to harm him; indeed, I felt a sudden liking for the old fellow, and would have ventured out into the yard had he not clashed his horns against a branch and frightened me into a stealthy retreat.

III

But the Brook as it ran through the alders and willows was the joy of my young life. The upper part was on old Alfred Langley's land, and I always looked cautiously about before climbing over the line fence, for fear he might catch me and do some dreadful thing to me, I scarcely knew what. Once while picking checkerberries in his pasture I had looked up to find him bending over me, a sardonic grin on his lined and leathery face that made me cry out in my sleep that night.

On down the Brook past a cranberry bog, where in late fall I gathered frosted fruit, was the bridge over which every winter Alfred hauled his firewood with a pair of bony red-and-white oxen whose flight down the mountain side from the sled load of logs to which they were attached was to my child's mind a breath-taking performance. Just above the bridge was the watering place to which the gaunt old tyrant drove his cattle every night and morning through the long winter. Sometimes, in a fit of rage, he would mount his old sorrel mare and run the cows to and from this spot. Once a frightened cow slipped and broke a leg, and I hid behind some spruce bushes to watch him skin her. At every stroke of the knife he made queer doglike sounds in his throat that made me doubly afraid of him.

That bright, frosty night I crept to the brow of the hill and watched the foxes that gathered about the carcass, yapping and snapping at each other until an old fellow who stood guard on a cliff gave a sharp bark, at which they all scattered. By daylight I hunted up their tracks to see if they covered them by dragging their tails in the snow, as Bushby assured me they did; but the tracks were clear enough.

Alfred set several traps near the carcass, but never caught a fox. He used to bury the traps in hayseed and wear woolen mittens when he pressed down the springs; but all he caught was an occasional crow — that is, until one day a great white-headed bird got fast and flew away over the mountain with a trap clamped to its leg. Served him right, we boys all agreed.

Not far below the bridge was the line fence between old Alfred's farm and our own. On our side alders grew rank, and there I always went for my first whistle, pounding the bark loose with the handle of my jackknife, and spitting on the naked wood when I

wished to slip the bark back to see if it would blow.

In this swamp I found cocoons attached to alder twigs (odd that I never found them anywhere else), and one cold January day I gathered a handful of them and took them home. I placed them on the mantel over the fireplace, and in due time three beautiful moths with an eye on each wing appeared, flew about the room for a day, and then perished of cold during the night. I still remember the sudden hurt as I came upon one lying still on its side under a potted geranium.

Once in the swamp I found a wild duck's nest. It was cleverly hidden under the edge of a spruce bush between two tussocks, and the mother bird, as she whirled up past my face, frightened me so badly that I dropped my string of fish. Every day after my discovery I hid in some bushes and watched her. She seemed the very embodiment of waiting stillness. I could scarcely think of her heart beating or of her breathing. One morning when I peered through the bushes the nest was empty, and a dozen tiny ducklings in coats of orange down were paddling about a still water where the brook widened out. As I watched, a sleek black head appeared above the surface, disappeared, and then a frightened duckling fluttered for a moment before it was pulled under. So far as I could see, the mother never missed it.

Under our own bridge lived a wily old trout that for years I tried to catch. The sides of the bridge were made of heavy logs, and under the bottom log on the north side he lived winter and summer, through floods, and through droughts that brought the water perilously low. He had a white scar on the left side of his body, and a hook in his upper lip at an angle that always reminded me of old Joe Sanders smoking his pipe. Oh, the hours I have fished

for him, lying on my belly peering down through a wide crack between the poles that covered the bridge! When the hook was lowered he would sail out and with cool nonchalance inspect it, even nosing it about a little; but in the end, with a leisurely flip of his tail, he would retreat to his castle. He was never obliged to make forays among the aqueous serfs and villeins in the neighboring territory; every gust of wind, every shower and freshet, brought new supplies to his door.

Below the bridge the Brook widened into a shallow pool paved with many-colored stones and patches of gleaming gravel. Across this the cows passed morning and night on their way to and from pasture. Each one stepped slowly and cautiously, cocking her tail a little in the deepest part.

Here a school of 'shivvins,' with scaly sides that gleamed like tiny jewels, fooled all day in the sunshine. They were never more than six inches long, not very good to eat, and I caught a mess of them only when the trout would not bite. The 'bladder' in them was in two parts, tied together like a couple of sausages. Of what earthly use it could be was quite beyond my child's comprehension. I used to press it with my thumb nail to hear it pop.

Over the shivvins played a host of 'skippers,' long-legged, spider-like fellows with a tiny pontoon on each foot. How I used to envy them, for they could play in the water all day with dry feet. One morning our Sunday-school teacher told us about Christ walking on the water, and I exclaimed, 'Just like a skipper!' My pat simile shocked the good man, and brought me a severe reprimand.

IV

Not far below this shallow pool the South Branch joined the Brook where a witch-hazel always puzzled me by

blooming so late in the fall that flurries of snow sometimes mingled with the yellow-dusted catkins. This small stream had its origin in a swamp where cows, tempted by the green grass of late summer, were sometimes bogged. Once, while looking for pitcher plants, I came upon 'Old Baldy' sunk so deep in the mire that only her face and horns showed above the black mud. Before I could gather enough wits to run for help, she gave a fearful roar, struggled so violently that the surrounding bog shook, and then vanished. I am not sure whether, when I told my story to the family, I was considered a hero or a villain.

And here, in the gloom of squat, wide-branching hackmatacks, glossy spruce partridges sat all day like feckless things. Bushby Dow showed me how to slip up behind and snare them with a wire on the end of a pole; but, try as I might, I was never successful, for even the stupidest of them would duck its head at the crucial moment.

In the middle of this swamp was a 'boiling spring' from whose mysterious depths mica was always rising, and falling away on all sides like a great flower in the perpetual act of unfolding. Its water was supposed to have valuable medicinal qualities, and my father conceived the idea of piping it into the house. There were no iron pipes in the Valley in those days, but some ingenious fellow made an auger with an extremely long shank, cut second-growth firs into sixteen-foot lengths, and bored a hole from end to end. Occasionally the auger would run out the side and spoil a length; but for the most part it followed the heart with uncanny accuracy. Every six inches the tool had to be drawn out to dispose of the chips, an operation attended with much grunting and a deal of profanity.

The task of putting in this water

system was nothing less than herculean, for the spring was nearly a mile away. What those pipes cost in sweat and labor would to-day buy iron pipe for a small town. In the end, water, soft and pure, flowed in a continual stream from a pipe over the sink, and on out to the drinking trough in the barnyard. From this it passed to another trough (each was cut out of a pine log) at the side of the road, where many a thirsty horse was reined in to drink. My father maintained this trough at his own expense, and the public came to take it for granted, grumbling if by any chance it went dry.

Where the pipe line crossed the Brook the depression was so great that it was impossible to cover the wood with earth, so it was heavily weighted down with stones against spring freshets. At this low point a plug was inserted, the removal of which drained out the collected sediment that, if undisturbed, grew into a fibrous rope yards long, at length filling the pipe and cutting off the supply of water. Occasionally I would remove the plug, just to see the water shoot into the air higher than my head. But I always paid for my fun; for I was thoroughly drenched before I got the plug back in place.

A few rods below the pipe line the Brook turned to the north round the end of a snub-nosed hill. At the tip of this rocky ridge grew a large gray birch, squat, wide-branched, with a drunken lurch to the east. Into its bark generations of boys, passing it while trout, had carved their initials, some in the crudest of characters, others with artistic flourishes that revealed the embryo artist. It was a code of freemasonry, in its essence older than the pyramids of Egypt, more vital, more time-resisting than all the creeds.

Below this tree the soil deepened, patches of water cress graced the

leisurely flowing stream, and the trout holes under the banks were more cavernous. Here the fish were larger, lazier, not so easily tempted to grab at an angworm writhing on a hook as were the fish farther upstream.

By the age of eleven I had gathered considerable piscatorial lore. I had learned to tread as softly as ever Caliban would wish, always removing my white straw hat when approaching a hole, and never letting my shadow fall across the water. I don't remember how I discovered that trout bite well on cloudy days, and best of all in a downpour. Whenever it rained, I would look longingly out of the school window near the bench from which my brown legs dangled, and think of the trout I might be catching in the Brook. One night when the rain was humming a soft tune on the roof, and the enticing smell of opening buds was in the air, I came to the sudden resolve to play hooky (did some small boy, on fishing bent, coin the word?) the next day and go trouting.

I wore no jacket that eventful morning — just my cotton shirt and trousers that always bagged at the knees. No shoes, either. Just the eternal boy by the eternal brook. I still hear the *plot-plot* of the rain-drops as they plunged headlong into the water. Trout, of a size I had never dreamed lived under those banks, seized my hook every time I lowered it through the rain-pitted surface. On clear days I had often watched an old fellow lurking under a shelving rock, but he had always ignored even the fattest worm; to-day my first glimpse of him was when his head broke through the bubbling water. The rain added to the lustre of his speckled sides, and when he flounced clear of the hook I pounced upon him when he was already back in the Brook.

In half an hour my forked hazel branch was so heavily loaded with

spotted beauties that the weight of them tired my arm. And this is a 'happy ending' story, for my mother did not scold me when I came dripping into the kitchen and presented her with the fish. I was knighted, in fact (my insignia were dry clothes from a special stock in her own closet), like those old English freebooters who brought home to good Queen Bess treasure ships from the Spanish Main. For women were pragmatists long before William James discovered that convenient word. As for the teacher — but teachers have no place in a small boy's philosophy; it is too ancient, deep rooted, to be disturbed by such a recent and superfluous thing.

V

The fence that terminated my fisherman's paradise, stretching four rails high right across the Brook, was leprous with dried 'frog spawn,' lodged there by the spring freshets. Every small boy in the Valley who knew anything about ponds and brooks believed that this slimy, rope-like growth was deposited by frogs. And there is one form of belief in a boy's heart that can never be shaken — that which he receives from another boy. For one boy's loyalty to another is the most unshakable thing in human experience.

Beyond the fence two steep banks faced each other, and across the narrow space between someone had built a milldam. The mill itself had long vanished; but the high ridge of earth, cut through by the old flume, was still there, though softened in outline. In winter, swept clean of snow by gales from the marshes, it was bleak and forbidding, but in spring it was yellow with dandelions, in which bees held high carnival. The spot was sheltered from the chilly east winds of April, and there I would lie by the hour, digging my toes into the grass and conjuring up the mill as it might have been. For I

never asked a soul its history; that would have spoiled my child's game. I always pictured a large man with a Roman nose and a grizzled beard driving the dogs into the log to be sawn, and then riding the carriage until the board dropped away. I came to know his gait, the sound of his heavy footsteps, and even his voice when he talked to himself; but, oddly enough, I never gave him a name.

Beyond the dam was a boggy hayfield, where one had to jump from tussock to tussock. Here on warm June nights lightning bugs glowed softly in patches large as a dish pan, and occasionally a ball of whitish fire rose and drifted rapidly away when there seemed to be not a breath of air. One evening as I was crossing this swale a large ball passed close to my head, and the old German with the big stomach and bristling whiskers said, when he heard of it, that I was marked for death. I was badly frightened for a day or two; but life was far too fascinating to remember this gloomy prophecy for long.

Cutting squarely across the swale was the King's Highway, at this point a granite-walled structure that seemed to my child's mind the work of nothing less than giants. Looking back, I realize that the labor involved in gathering and placing those unhewn boulders by nothing more effective for power than oxen must have been a staggering task.

Along the top of either side the old Puritan fathers who built it had planted willows, now grown to formidable proportions, with their roots running snakelike down between the boulders. Under this mass of stone and earth, which to me seemed as indestructible as the globe itself, the fathers had built a tunnel to carry off the brook water. To venture into that dark passage toward the diminished square of light at the farther end was a

first-rate adventure, carrying with it the abiding fear that the roof might cave in and trap me, leaving me buried alive like some colliers I had heard my father read about, who were entombed in a coal mine.

My favorite time for exploring this fearsome place was late August. Then the water was low, and the great pine logs, squared with broadaxe and adz, that formed both floor and ceiling were clearly visible under the shallow water that rippled over them. I would pause for a little, peer in for any lurking enemy, and then enter as cautiously as my remote skin-clad ancestors must have ventured into a newly discovered cave. The sudden coolness, and the air that drew briskly through from the marshes beyond, always brought a chill to my body, which only the soundness of a boy who virtually lived out of doors could resist. The sunlight, the clouds, the birds, suddenly seemed remote, unreal. Small eels were always squirming between the logs on their way upstream; but I never saw a trout in there. As the ceiling was too low to stand erect, water was always dripping down the back of my neck. Once I mistook the rumble of a carriage overhead for the collapse of the heavy timbers, and ran with all the speed I could muster in my cramped position, unwittingly plunging into the deep basin of water at the farther end, dug when the spring freshets boiled out of the tunnel.

VI

Below the highway was our calf pasture, in spring joyous with frogs, and in early summer yellow with buttercups. What handfuls of them I used to gather, and how vividly I remember the first cup I ventured to hold under a girl's chin! But, alas, I do not remember her name, or even her face — only the vaguely disturbing chin with its soft curves.

The Brook at this spot slowed down and deepened into pools that reached well under willow-fringed banks. To see the bottom, I would lie on my stomach and shade my eyes with my straw hat. Here were no trout or shivvins; the water was not alive and clear enough for that; but over the brown sediment eels slowly serpentine, and on it eighteen-inch suckers lay in a torpor so deep that I could slip my hand under those in shallow water and toss them out on the bank. Here, too, mud turtles rested like fat old ladies in plaid shawls. Occasionally a muskrat moved rapidly across this still world, the fur sleeked down to his sides, the disturbed water that slipped back from the tip of his nose resembling a comet I had seen pictured in my geography. It was the borderland between brook and river, a bit sobering, with the mystery of the great marshes beyond.

How well I remember the last clear pool before the muddy tidewater began! Here, screened by a pile of boulders, an occasional crane stood dejectedly on one leg (I used to wonder if he had cut the other foot and it hurt), as if meditating upon his sins. With what awe I used to watch his slow and ponderous flapping as he blundered up at my approach!

From this pool on, the channel deepened rapidly. The muddy banks bristled with bulrushes, between which night-prowling muskrats left tracks on their way to and from the lily pads whose small bulbs they unearthed in the darkness. Occasionally a muskrat trap ('box trap,' we always called it) drifted in on the earth-brown tide — one whose loss some other boy deeply regretted, but which I gladly appropriated. If a stray skiff chanced along, I hid it behind a certain rock and paddled about at high tide, never venturing out into the racing river. But my possession of one of these crude

crafts was always short-lived, for some larger boy was sure to carry it off. Once a queer-looking fish, short, thick, and larger than the largest hog we had ever butchered, floated in on a neap tide, lodged among the bulrushes, and for days gave off such a stench that we could not have our daily swim. Later, I learned it was a sturgeon that had become entangled in a fish net.

The Brook, here known as 'the Creek' (pronounced 'crick'), gave itself to the river from between steep-sloping mud banks; and the river received it unheedingly, a perpetual verification of the hard proverb, 'Unto him that hath shall be given.'

At the mouth of the creek we boys of the neighborhood made our last stand as fishermen. On the left bank of the channel we fished for suckers in the deep water scooped out by an inshore current. To catch suckers in that basin required skill of no mean order, and quite belied the ease implied in the phrase as we use it in human transactions. The best fisherman among us was a hero in a much deeper sense than is any football star. His was the perpetuation of an art that has its roots in savagery, and from savagery comes all that is vital in life.

The first requisite for this sport was a long pole, sometimes thirty feet in length. To find one of just the right slimness and flexibility often required weeks of searching in the deep forest, and the possession was coveted beyond everything else except a breech-loading shotgun. The butt end of this pole was thrust into the mud, and the heavy-sinker line swung deftly out well over the water, with a calculating eye for the eddies and ever-shifting currents. The most successful fishermen seemed to have a 'hunch' as to where the suckers would run from day to day—never twice in the same place—as they passed upstream in endless thousands

on their way from we knew not where to the brooks to spawn. Did they ever return downstream? If so, when? On this point I am quite as ignorant as I was then.

March was the sucker month. Then they were almost as active as trout, and their white flaky meat was good eating. The endless hours I have stood in the mud with a dozen other boys watching my pole as the dark water slipped under it! Often a keen north wind spit snow in our faces, and ice cakes floated by; but there we would stand, without overcoat or mittens, enduring hardships that would send a city boy to his grave.

We would watch in silence the rhythmic swaying of the pole under the recurring tug of the line; then would come the sudden dip of the end, and the owner would pull up with just the right speed to keep the hook fast in the soft round mouth that had taken the bait. The bent pole would suddenly straighten as the fish left the water, its tail spread wide and curved protestingly to one side to catch the air. Usually night was closing down before we young barbarians gathered up our catch and started for home, our cowhide boots coated with mud, our hands chapped and red, and in each heart a song such as only youth and fish and running water can inspire.

Later in the season, when warm nights made it pleasant to be abroad after dark, we would build a fire at the mouth of the creek on the right bank and fish for eels. Eels fried in butter make a dish fit for a king, and a deal too good for some kings I have read about. Why they could be caught from the right bank but not from the left remains a mystery. They were attracted by our bonfire; and occasionally the flare from added driftwood revealed the face of a seal that had come to the surface to inspect the light.

The big black eyes suddenly focused on me always frightened me, for they suggested a drowned man come back to life.

On still warm nights we would catch eels — big salt-water fellows a yard long — nearly as fast as we could bait our hooks. We would toss them into a pile, where, instead of making back for the river, they would coil themselves through and through each other until they formed a great squirming mass. To skin one was a feat indeed, the details of which need not be recorded here. The dried skin was used for tying flail and swingle together, and for 'snappers' to whiplashes. By the time the fire had burned low, our hands and clothes were covered with slime, and we would pick our way through the rank marsh grass toward home, our bare feet sensing all sorts of unseen things as accurately as could our eyes by daylight.

I have not seen the Brook for years, and probably never shall see it again; but it remains in memory the most vivid thing of all my life's experiences. For a growing boy, it was a kingdom of inexhaustible riches, the acquiring of which involved risks, adventures, thrills beside which any that befell me in later life as I wandered about the globe were tame indeed. Time, and time alone, sanctifies, makes sacred. To the boy, beauty is felt, not comprehended, and that which my mind associates with the Brook now was quite inarticulate then. I was just the eternal boy — the savage looking upon the morning of the world and pronouncing it good.

Now that I am gone, has any other young savage succeeded to the overlordship of the Brook? If so, greetings to you, brother! May your kingdom bring you as much joy as it brought the brown-skinned lad who once ruled over it — and loved it.

THE BIRTHDAY TREE

BY ANN BRIDGE

I

I IMAGINE that few women — unless they have recently become engaged to a millionaire, and have been generalizing about emeralds — look forward with any very keen pleasure to their fortieth birthday. It is no longer, it is true, the portal of middle age, for there is no age nowadays; but it is the beginning of Part II; and Part II, if the expectation of life is the same now as in the Psalmist's day, will be shorter than Part I. It may be equally agreeable; it may even be more agreeable — but we do not know; all we know is that it will be different. The assets, the technique, the experiences which made Part I what it was we cannot rely on in Part II. I, anyhow, had no very lively anticipations of this festival; I should have forgotten all about it if certain furtive and gleeful whisperings between the children and Cook had not reminded me that some monstrous confection would have to be admired and eaten next day. Least of all did I imagine that it would bring me one of those crystal moments of unexpected and quintessential joy which pierce through the muddy texture of common things, fill the eyes, and by their purity and perfection lift a simple emotion on to the plane of high art.

The Three came just before I was up to kiss me and wish me Many Happy Returns of the Day, which they did with a certain rather self-conscious smugness. At breakfast there was a present — one. It was from Aubrey —

a hurricane lantern of a special pattern which was, he kindly assured me, very nearly foolproof, and which I should find invaluable for visiting the incubators next spring. In late August incubators seem rather remote. Still, I was not chilled — a present is a present, Aubrey is not a millionaire, and I never talk about emeralds.

At 10.30 Sabina handed me a note, heavily sealed, with instructions to open it at 11.30. The Three then vanished. At 11.30 I opened the note. It contained a rough map of the fields about the house, with a line of arrows indicating the route to a certain small gate near the edge of what the villagers still call 'the forest.' 'Go to this spot,' red-ink lettering informed me, 'and you will receive further instructions.'

II

Out in the fields the August sun beat down in splendor on the cracked brown turf, making great blue caves in the dusty late green of the elms. The thistle heads were opening in the heat and spilling their mischievous silvery contents in all directions. No one was in sight as I approached the little gate, but it first shivered uncertainly, and finally burst open with a jerk toward me. An ingenious arrangement of fine green string in the hedge had produced this effect of unseen hands. I passed through. There stood Patrick, stocky, rosy, and

self-conscious, in fancy dress of a rather miscellaneous character — I spotted a pair of my own silk knickers and Sabina's best gray school stockings, besides other items. In one hand he carried a sweet-scented autumn nose-gay, in the other a second note. With two low bows he presented me with both. I read the note. 'Follow the bearer to the split tree and into the wood — from there you will see your way.'

Repressing a strong desire to kiss the bearer's downy freckled face, I said, 'I follow.' In solemn silence he led me across the bracken topmost corner of the field, full of devil's-bit scabious, to the split tree — an old ilex with a double trunk, which is our regular highway into the wood. Scrambling through, I saw a most curious sight.

From the ilex a tiny narrow path leads away and uphill into the heart of the wood. This had been swept clear of every leaf and twig and pine needle, and the sweepings had been piled up in neat little heaps at regular intervals on both sides of the path. But every heap was crowned with a branch of green bracken, and on each branch lay a posy of flowers. Here a bunch of asters, there pink or white stocks; marigolds, mignonette, gladiolus; a late rose or two, a tress of wistaria from the second blooming; cosmos, heliotrope — and, when these failed, the great starry blossoms of purple or white clematis, or single flowers from the big creamy or crimson hollyhocks. In the deep shade this flowery pathway gleamed as if picked out with little many-colored lamps. Startled, amused, touched by this pretty conceit, I followed the path, indeed 'seeing my way,' the bearer now behind me. For a good quarter of a mile it led me through the wood. What hours of patient toil, sweeping and piling the heaps! What a triumph of organization — for every

bough and flower was firm and dew-fresh!

At last the path came out at a place I know well, and dearly love. A huge beech tree stands alone in the space it has cleared for itself, a circle thirty yards across, at whose outer rim the undergrowth stops as if cut with a knife. Where the path debouched into this circle two larger heaps of leaves, each crowned with an immense bouquet, stood like gateposts. But my eyes were held by the circle itself. Here too every inch of soil had been swept bare, and a rampart of dead leaves a foot or more high surrounded it. In the centre rose the great trunk of the beech, and about it the ground for twenty feet was carpeted with fresh-strewn fern, while a narrow green ribbon of the same led out to it from the end of my path. At the foot of the tree stood a sort of altar, also all of green save the top, which was covered with posies of flowers, among which I discerned the gleam of white tissue paper. Here were the presents I had missed at breakfast — here was my fortieth birthday!

III

For a moment I stood in tears, unable to see. Then I looked again. No one was in sight — circle, altar, and tree stood deserted in the dappled silence. Suddenly with a rustling of boughs there burst through the rhododendrons first Sabina, barefooted, her shining hair combed loose from its plaits and floating to her waist over her soft Confirmation dress; then Helena, also in her best muslin and also barefoot. They danced up to me, danced round me, and curtsied deeply before me. But formalities vanished now in a tempest of hugs and kisses. In the middle Patrick touched my arm — 'What an inopportune apparition!' he muttered in dismay. I

looked where he pointed. The figure of Searle, the keeper, was approaching down another path.

Such a moment could suffer no blasting. I went over to him. 'Look, Searle, what the children have made for my birthday! Is n't it pretty?'

Searle pushed his cap over one ear, the better to scratch his head. 'Well,' he observed with a long breath, 'I'm glad to know the rights o' this at last. More'n a fortnight I seen someone been sweepin' that little path, and then a-clearin' this spot — but I never could catch 'em. Come dinner time, I did, and early mornin' when I'd fed the pheasants, but I never see no one.' Muffled giggles from behind told me that Searle had not been himself unseen. 'This mornin' I see the green fern on the 'eaps,' he went on, 'and I thought it was the school children. But those flowers — that's right pretty, that is. You swept all this, miss?' to Sabina. 'Well, that's a fair bit o' work! Best take some o' these leaves home for your garden, ma'am, now they *are* swep' up.'

No, even Searle could not resist it. We gave him a posy for his wife — heliotrope and the silvery blue of

arctotis — and he took himself off, full of good humor, to his pheasants.

We cleared the altar of flowers — thirty-seven bunches there were — and sat on it to discuss the presents: the cigarette case from Patrick, Helena's chocolate, and the linen night-dress case that had kept Sabina busy for a twelvemonth. I heard all the details of the work — those early morning walks from six to eight were now explained — and how they had 'beat it into the rhodos' on the many occasions when Searle had come to find out who was sweeping in his wood. I was even shown the suitcase in which they had carried up their best frocks and Patrick's fancy dress. 'But you walked so fast, Mummie, we had no time to put on our stockings.' Blessed speed — I would not have missed my woodland nymphs for the world.

Emeralds are beautiful — I love them. But not even for emeralds would I exchange that first moment at the beech tree, when sight and speech were lost in an emotion so sudden, so pure, so perfect, as to defy time and change. For what can buy bliss? Who *would n't* be forty?

POST-OBIT FOR POST-DEPRESSIONISTS

BY LEONARD BACON

‘Grant me, kind Heaven, to find some happier place!’—Johnson’s *London*

UPON the foul unfashionable quay
Where hulked the freighter bound for the South Sea,
My old friend waited. I could not dispel
Trouble in my spirit at that long farewell.
‘This ship,’ I said, ‘why pick a rusty waif
Of tragic seas, unlovely and unsafe?
I know of many better ways to die.
Sail on that lobster pot? I can’t think why.’

‘Think!’ he replied, biting the word in two,
‘Why, that, my lad, is what you’ve got to do.
Think of a dropsical republic’s pains.
Think of a brain trust, trusting to what brains!
Think of our fathers who passed on the fire,
And think of six-score millions gone haywire.
Think of the farmer in the shell game licked.
Think of the kicker. Consider too the kicked.
And think of brokers and the lies they lied,
Of buyers’ markets, handsome, high, and wide,
Of Rockefeller and the House of Morgan,
Of Darrow, Mellon, and of Demogorgon.
Think about guts and nature in the raw,
Of Minneapolis and Martial Law.
Think about asses and the War of Classes
And the *New Republic’s* sulphur and molasses.
Think of a kite that rose and likewise fell,
Of Atchison and American Tel. and Tel.
Think of those economic artless dodgers,
Professor Warren and Professor Rogers,

Whose thought no native intellect explains,
 Nor even the transatlantic J. M. Keynes.
 Think of rapt highbrows in committees snuggling,
 Of Tugwell's babbling and of Richberg's juggling;
 Of jurists lost in legislation's bog
 (Frankfurter, as the joke goes, is hot dog);
 Of Farley and his gangsters in a huddle
 With credulous Cummings, mixing up the muddle,
 Whose simple mind, one way and single-track,
 Once sought to cut a Mellon that cut back;
 Of Harold Ickes shrieking in despair,
 Caught in the tangles of his Nira's hair.

'And think how Johnsons never are too few.
 First there was Hiram. Now we suffer Hugh.
 Who at that vocal flywheel dares to scoff,
 That tells the Universe where it gets off?
 Yet never the arch principle forgot,
 To drop a subject when it got too hot,
 Or let a method which he dared not try,
 Innocuous, in a committee die.
 When incandescent issues start to chafe,
 With flaming violence he plays 'em safe,
 And deems that day inglorious and inept
 When no catastrophe has been sidestepped.
 And though his champions may justly plead
 That sort of thing's exactly what we need,
 I cannot think, in the strange times involved,
 A problem dodged becomes a problem solved.
 Yet one more thought. Conceive the passions ranklin'
 In loyal hearts that ache for Cousin Franklin
 Brooding o'er his witches' cauldron bubbling slowly,
 Full of herbs less medicinal than Mol[e]y.
 And think how, when the Herle-Berle's through,
 Your Congressmen will send the bill to you.
 I tell you it's a bitter cup to drink of,
 But that, my boy, is what *you've* got to think of.'

Such converse my old comrade with me held
 While the cranes clanked and quartermasters yelled.
 He went on: 'I'm fed up and that is flat.
 How bear with bureaucrat and plutocrat?
 How stand conservatives talking time-worn trash,
 Their minds distracted about petty cash?
 Uttering like parrots what was known for gammon
 Sometime before the reign of Tutankhamen?
 Who cannot see, in the full blaze meridian,
 That economics have gone non-Euclidian?
 Feebly they chant amid the cataclysm
 Baruch-room ballads against bimetallism.
 And unto thee all happiness impute,
 O golden-tongued Finance with serene loot.
 Or view the Intelligentsia, if you will,
 Every man jack of them extremely ill
 From constipated brains and logorrhœa,
 But yelping for some five-year planacea,
 Some played-out scheme misread, misunderstood,
 Which will improve the whole damned neighborhood.
 See those returning with pæans o'er the wave;
 The dollar took them and the dollar gave —
 A valid reason why the wise implore
 Congress to get *us* back on gold once more.

'Ill fares the land, swift hastening to her fate,
 Where wealth decays and boobs accumulate;
 Where a declining demos must be courted
 And those who venture naught must be supported;
 Where wisdom is supplanted by loquacity
 And there's a premium on incapacity.
 That's why we have by popular consent
 Such Representatives to represent.
 It's hard to grant such origins of tosh
 Represent anything at all, by gosh,
 Indicate our tendency and our direction,
 Afford of us a tolerable cross-section.

No! In the Senate when the windbags blare,
The men we *have* elected are not there.
Herd impulses are sweet. But those unheard
Are sweeter, where our actual spokesmen gird
Their loins in labs, or on far railway lines,
On the walls of dams, in the corridors of mines.
Our spokesmen! Who, in paths beyond our knowing,
Keep an exanimate republic going.
I've done my bit. I'm weary of the task.
Now a quick exit's all the prize I ask.

'That's why I'm bound where gentle Ocean shuts
Sweet isles apart, to live on coconuts.
If better men can do it, why not I?
When Roosevelt's levanted to Hawaii,
I flee "a world each morning obsolete,"
A world of pasteurized milk and shredded wheat;
A world bright only with a morbid slime
Of dull society and stagnant crime;
A world that staggering to destruction walks
And talks and talks and talks and talks and talks.
Stay if you like. I'll never balk your wish.
Go shoot your bandits. I'll be spearing fish.
Treat your pale leprosy and scratch your scurf.
Somehow I like the notion of warm surf
And brown girls singing in a moonstruck arbor.
To hell with Newport! Devil take Bar Harbor!'

'Take care,' said I, 'before the worst befall,
In another moment you'll write "Locksley Hall."'
Which did not seem to trouble him a lot.
He looked me in the eye and asked, 'Why not?'

Yet I was not bamboozled by that bluff.
I said: 'Old chap, you don't go far enough.
It's not traversing some dozens of degrees
Will insulate you from the times' disease.

The radiant isles are quick with human woe.
Ask Hall and Nordhoff. They will tell you so.
Nay! If a bright deliverance you would win,
Seek not the surf-ringed atolls. Search within.
Still in your eyes worn brightness I detect.
Revamp the remnants of your intellect.
Visit strange thought that mystery overwhelms,
The topless heights of philosophic realms.
View with a poet's visionary glance
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance.
And seek to see with inly-piercing eyes
The blazing beauty that they symbolize.
Or, if you like, there's still another track.
We'll plump for Science. Heisenberg and Dirac
Shall lead us through the mathematic door
Of infinitesimals, and we'll explore
Atomic vastitudes where never lie
Outfaces ruthless probability.
Or better yet, I think, for you and me,
Beyond frontiers of fiery nebulae,
Light as a dream our printless feet shall tread,
Where against starshine glooms the "Horse's Head."
Doubtless in the past your isles might be good stuff,
But now an endless light-year's scarce enough
To part us from the feebleness and folly,
The brainless mirth, more brainless melancholy.
Let all such matters like a hell-broth bubble,
We're for the spheres with Shapley and with Hubble,
To draw from voids where Sirius flames afar
All the strange meaning of Van Maanen's star,
To traffic with existence that is rife
Eternally, before and after life,
To conquer terrors, whether Life's or Death's,
Castrate conventions, cauterize shibboleths,
And take our ease in an interstellar Zion.
Come on, old cock, the next stop is Orion.'

A POST OFFICE IN FAIRYLAND

BY HILDA WORTHINGTON SMITH

I

It was a double life we three children lived in those days: one existence made up of real people and tangible things; the other, equally real to us, full of imaginary characters living in a land of dreams. In this modern day of child psychologists, it is probable that this second delightful world of fairies and elves, invisible playmates and fancied adventures, would be frowned upon. Reality would face us, and we should be asked to choose between fact and fancy, and to know them apart. Then, we hardly knew the difference between them. In a state of serene confusion we went through our days, setting places at the table for fairies and brownies, conversing familiarly with them when we were alone, and the next moment passing with no effort into the other world, no more real to us and often less interesting.

I can remember the feeling of desolation which swept over me when one day in a moment of confidence I consulted my mother as to the relative reality of my two worlds. 'Do you mean that there are no people *at all* except those you can see and touch?' I asked incredulously, hoping against hope that at least a selected few of my fairy friends and neighbors might win through to an actual existence. My mother gave an honest answer to my honest question, and my heart sank. Suddenly the world seemed depopulated, not worth living in, as though plunged in some mysterious catas-

trophe. With a dark sense of irretrievable loss, I gulped and went quietly out of the room.

But long before this devastating episode the facts of our fairy-tale lives were well established. Sue and I were capable young Fairies, accepted in all elfin circles. John we considered one of the Brownies, a race somewhat apart, but equally at home in the land of fancy, and with certain responsibilities of their own. The three elves, Fairy Apple Blossom, her small sister Forgetmenot, and the Brownie, Lightning, lived in a whirl of imaginary activities, often interrupted, but never completely overshadowed by the realities of everyday existence.

No one in his senses could step on gravel in our yard without wetting his feet, or even risking danger of drowning. Gravel was water, and we never ventured on it without waiting for a ferryboat to come along. Docks were situated at convenient intervals up the roadway and around the garden, so that one could board the boat almost anywhere. The horse block by the porch was our nearest dock, and here we waited many long minutes while irritated elders, having dispatched us on some errand, tried to urge haste. But we would not stir until our boat came in sight, and, walking up its gangplank in a leisurely way, we steamed up the graveled road in a safe and proper fashion.

Our daily morning routine was un-

varied, and, although planned entirely by ourselves, brought as great a feeling of responsibility as any more actual and necessary jobs. First there were our stables to be cleaned: two cubbies at the end of the porch, where our three steeds — the velocipede, the tricycle, and the express wagon — were comfortably housed. Imaginary hay was thrown down into invisible racks, and fresh straw supplied. A thorough brushing and currying followed before we hitched up to go to the dock, to meet various contingents of our fairy friends. Punctually they arrived every morning, waving their hands to us from the deck of the ferryboat on its way across the gravel from the locust-tree dock up the road. All day we had their companionship, and escorted them down to the horse-block dock late in the afternoon, just in time for the last boat back to Fairyland.

The velocipede, the tricycle, and the express wagon — what affection was lavished on those faithful animals of wood and iron, and to what hard and varied uses were they put! While I was fond of them all, the long wooden pole of the express wagon, when disconnected from its cart, was my favorite steed, vaguely associated in my mind with horseback riding. Many a canter down the porch I enjoyed astride its long wooden back. In addition to this stable of useful beasts, we also owned three entirely imaginary black ponies, useful for longer journeys, and kept out at pasture in the Vale of Tauensentha, a little clump of pines and hemlocks bordering our gravel road. The spirit of the Vale was the Fairy Rose, with whom we gossiped about affairs of the day whenever we entered the little pine wood to catch and saddle our ponies.

II

After we three had adopted our fairy names, my father at our urgent request

agreed to make us each a fairy wand. That he would know just how to fashion a wand and endow it with elfin power we never doubted. One Sunday morning he brought them to us, three long smooth tapering sticks, carefully cut and sandpapered to a snowy whiteness, each with a fairy name carved near its base: 'Blossom'; 'Forgetmenot'; 'Lightning.' How pleased we were and how excited with the thought of new powers bestowed upon us! Bows of ribbon were attached near the top of the sticks for dress occasions. Very soon a regular lesson in the use of wands was instituted, myself installed by common consent as professor of magic. The others waved their wands carefully according to my directions, while we all three repeated our mystic formulas. The copy I find of these rules and regulations seems to cover every contingency of life and might be recommended to people faced with equally difficult situations at a later age: —

When you wish for anything, hold your wand right up straight and wish.

If someone is chasing you, take a few drops of water or some leaves and throw them behind you, and a forest will spring up or an ocean.

If a witch comes to you, take a little stone and turn it in your hand twice and she will be compelled to go away.

If a bad fairy has visited houses, go out and stand by your door, turn around three times, look up and breathe nine times, and an eagle will come and tell you what to do.

If you want to grant three wishes, touch their heart, their forehead, and the middle finger of their left hand, and the wishes are granted.

If a giant is coming after you, turn around and look at him and say 'Glamor, Glamor rame gluck.' Something will come to you with wings and you can fly. Do not fly too high.

If you are puzzled about something, go into a wood all alone and the first nutshell you see open and a letter in it will tell you what to do.

Often since my childhood I have wished for such a code of concise and definite directions to stave off dangers and difficulties. Pursued in later life by giants, witches, bad fairies, or other powers of evil, many of us look in vain for that fairy nutshell with the little letter, the friendly eagle to give us advice, or 'something with wings,' so that we can fly.

Appended to this code of directions is a helpful list, giving the number of times one must wave a magic wand to call certain beneficent agents for service, together with the articles one wishes immediately produced: —

Fairies.....1	Water.....1
Brownies.....2	Wood.....2
Elves.....3	Air.....3
Goblins.....4	Bread.....4
Dwarfs.....5	Fire.....5
Trouls.....6	Sute.....6
Witches.....7	Picture.....7
Mermaids.....8	Music.....8
	Book.....9

That is, if one is hungry and wishes a goblin to appear with a slice of bread, it is necessary only to wave the wand eight times, with a slight pause after the first four. It is interesting to see that all human needs, material and artistic, are neatly summed up in this list, if the cryptic word 'Sute' is taken to mean clothing. Beyond such a category, what else could one need or desire?

Speaking of clothes brings to mind our fairy wardrobes, planned with great care, and listed for each of us with the name of the garment and the material of which it was woven. (Needless to say, our everyday clothing was made of less diaphanous material, and received no such anxious consideration from us. The responsibility for these more mundane garments and their condition we left trustingly and entirely to our mother.)

Lying on the cool matting under

the spare-room bed, our favorite hot-weather retreat, we planned our wardrobes. On my sister's list I find included a bewildering collection of fairy frocks — enough, I should say, to turn an elfin head with vanity. Dresses of bouncing Bet, of locust blossom, of wistaria, and of trumpet vine hung in her magic closet, all made of the daintiest materials — 'gauze, shimmer, gossamer, sparkle.' John, as suitable for a boy, had a list of more sombre garments — 'browns, reds, black, oak, pine,' but made of the same shimmering textiles. An account of my own dresses I fail to find in these fairy archives. I can only conjecture, remembering various events related to more material clothing, that very soon after the garments came into my possession I must have torn the dresses and lost the list.

Lucky stones of various sizes were a part of our magic equipment. These stones, always exceptionally round and smooth, we carefully collected, a little one to carry in every pocket, and a big one to repose behind one post of every bed. Before we could expect the stones to be efficacious in warding off evil, however, they must be converted from their ordinary function by means of a suitable ceremony. This ceremony I arranged and conducted about once a week, retiring into some dark closet with the stones and my wand, and coming out with the conviction that through my magic agency the power of good fortune had come into the stones.

Often I slipped away from the others, and stole down into the garden just before dusk. October was coming, and it was time to put in the fairies' winter coal. There under the day-lily leaves it would be getting very cold when frost was on the ground. (Was it my father's long connection with the business of heating houses that made me feel concern that the elfin population should

enjoy a comfortable warmth?) Looking around to be sure I was not observed, I picked up a handful of gravel, and threw it against the broad leaves of the day lilies. There was a satisfying rattle as the fairy coal went down into the lily cellar. Handful after handful of gravel I threw until all the elfin bins were full.

III

In bed at night in the nursery, Sue and I installed a complete system of telegraphic communication with our friends in Fairyland. The little brass knobs in a row at the head and foot of our twin iron beds were designed especially, we believed, for a Morse code, such as we had often heard clicking away in the station master's office at the railroad station. Every brass button connected by a direct wire with one of our magic territories, and we acted as our own telegraphers. Each night in the week was reserved for a visit to one special country. As we drifted off to sleep we imagined ourselves starting on one of these airy journeys. Each morning we reported our adventures. These nightly journeys were supposedly accomplished by means of quick transportation on a big moth, setting forth from the nursery window. The number of luminous winged creatures always fluttering against the screen, ready to be saddled and bridled for midnight journeys, suggested this transportation system, which worked entirely to our satisfaction.

Sitting on the floor of my father's workshop, with purloined sheets of brown paper spread around me, I began to write a descriptive geography of this fairy country. My effort soon flagged, and only the first pages and a few rudimentary maps are preserved. The first section opens with the following:—

FAIRYLAND AS A WHOLE

In Fairyland there are eighteen lands. There is Fairiland in that, just as New York City is in New York State. The Queen Tatania and King Oberon rule over all the lands but Ohio and Clothesland over which Queen Mab and King March rule. Formally Mab ruled over Fairyland but marrying a mortal man she was disinherited and the place given to her younger sister Tatania and she rules over Ohio and Clothesland which are not fairy lands. Oberon has three children and March and Mab one.

FAIRYLAND, THE STATE

There are two parts to Fairyland, the outside ring where the people live and the inside ring where only the fairies live. Queen Tatania lives in the middle of the inner circle in a rose palace. Her children's names are Blackeyes, the oldest boy, Brown-eyes the next girl and Blueyes the baby. The animals Reilief is also there.

BABILAND

The State of Babiland is across the blue River from Fairiland on the east. There are five towns in it, named Cradle, Rockabye, Creeping, Toddling, and Singing. Our chief interests are in Toddling which is across the Mab River from Creeping. There is a large Ophanasilum there the head of which is Sister Katharine. There are 66 children and 20 nurses and 7 Doctors. Sister Katharine's cousin, Loy Gordon is the one in this Ophanasilum that shows people around. Sister Margerate Hathe tends to the servants and dairy. Both me and my sister are nurses.

NOLAND

This land is directly south of Fairiland and the family there we are most acquainted is Mr. & Mrs. Deets. Their family consists of four children, namely, Gretchen Deets, a girl of twelve, Tom one year younger, Tye a girl of eight and Robbie of six. There Aunt Tyetinia lives with them for whom the 3rd child was named. This family lives in the principle town of No-where. There are several other towns.

THE LAND OF NOD

The Land of Nod, — otherwise St. Nod's Land, is southeast of the center of all

things, fairyland. The family there we are most familiar with is the Whites. Mr. White is a Doctor by prophession. His children are Nellie — who is very much afraid of animals and 11 years old, Willy of 9 and Merry otherwise Marion who is 7. Oliver White born the New Year 1899 is three months old. Towns are Nod-a-bye Town, Sun, Shadow, Chair. Our friends live in the first of these names.

SLEEP LAND

Sleepland is not much of a place. We have not many friends there either. Maud Wiggins was our only one.

CLOTHES LAND

This Land is the only land except Ohio that Queen Mab rules over. There are dwarfs there for gardeners and the clothes grow on trees & bushes and shrubs. There is ribbon grass and all the clothes grow.

So much for the geography, which was never finished. It seems to be an admirable combination of history, geography, and those side lights on personalities which would add interest to any textbook.

Perhaps a few words of explanation would clarify the geographical material. Fairyland, variously spelled, naturally included all pleasant things and pleasant people, and was associated in our minds with a country landscape, scattered with villages in which it would be a delight to live. All urban activities were excluded, and such disagreeable necessities were relegated to a mythical country, Ohio, whose metropolis, Granite, — or, as I usually spelled it, Granet, — was the synonym for everything unpleasant. Clothesland naturally came under the dominion of unpleasantness, for clothes and all that concerned them were my abomination. A map of 'Granet' is uncompromisingly four-square, its streets marked out in rectangles and severely numbered, while the little map of Fairyland I find is delightfully irregular and inconsistent.

IV

The complexity of this world of fantasy has since amazed me. Certain families, carefully named down to the last dog and cat, were familiar to us. Certain responsibilities were part and parcel of our daily lives — for instance, the management of a large orphanage, mentioned in the geography.

Constant discussion of administrative details was, of course, necessary in connection with these enterprises, and a good deal of correspondence. We established a post office in a maple bureau near the nursery, and in its little top drawer deposited our letters and drew out our incoming mail. (The answers, I need not say, were composed in various suitable handwritings by myself.) A little pile of these letters, still in existence, show the constant activity of this imaginary life. Each one is carefully addressed, stamped, and postmarked. The stamp is usually a little sun, a tree, or a tiny window, and on the back of each letter is a round postmark.

A lecture bureau seems to have been established at about this same time, and, when textbook making began to pall, I sent out notices to the family, and took the stump. One announcement in a little blue envelope addressed to my father I find among his papers:

The first lecture on Fairyland. The subject for this evening being the management of the Babiland Ofanisilum.

Blue Room Dec. 18
Given by Fairy Blossom.

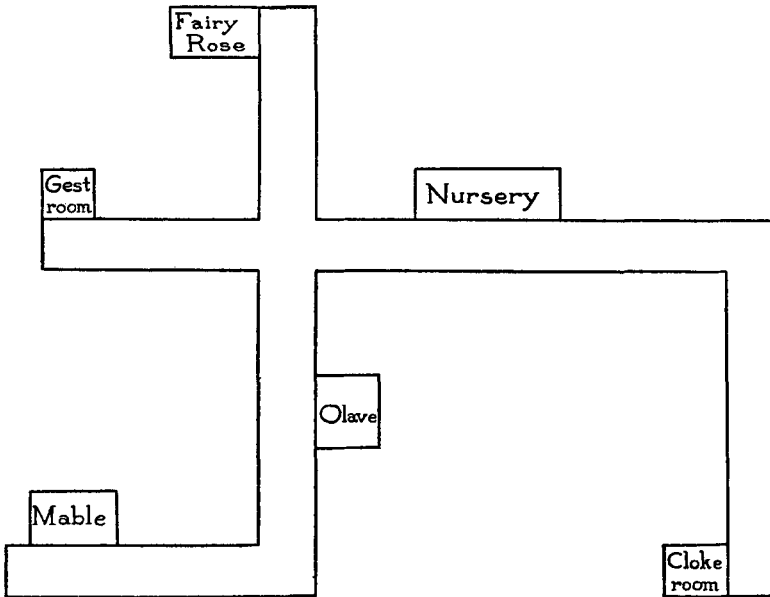
Whether my busy father attended this 'lecture' on institutional management, or whether, indeed, the discourse was ever given, I do not remember.

In a letter from one of the many doctors at the orphanage I am invited to 'come up on Monday, sure. A glad surprise if you do.' And that, as I remember, sets the keynote for all my

recollections of that place. It was full of 'glad surprises,' and therefore in our eyes a model institution. But there was nothing unsystematic about the 'Ofanislum.' Every child's name was recorded; a plan of every building was drawn; attention was given to the last detail of organization and management.

inary infirmary. There they were and there they stayed, for years, each group with its own assigned doctors and nurses, and for recreation its own list of ponies and horses, under the care of the most competent coachmen.

They were a nice lot of children. I select at random from the files:



Although I had never heard the word 'records,' some inkling of their value must have reached me at an early age, making me write down everything I considered of importance. These documents, now before me, would be illuminating to any modern group of child-welfare workers.

There were sixty-six children in the institution, twenty nurses, and seven doctors — not to mention our two faithful drug-store men, Mr. Ackerhane and Mr. Foolsbeed. The group of children was neatly divided into Boys, Girls, Babies, and Sick. I did not attempt to decide when a baby became a little girl or a boy, or just why the children listed in the Sick Ward should be permanent occupants of that imag-

Earnest, Olave, Margerate, Beartrice, Mable, and Ameila were all familiar to us. In an age of institutionalism, we were pioneers in individual care, for we planned in detail for our small charges, decided what dresses or suits each should wear, and what each one should have for breakfast. We were still old-fashioned in clinging to the dormitory idea in housing, but the rooms, as I remember them, were airy and sunlit, full of toys and books. Every detail was planned on paper. An architect might have pointed out all the waste space on one of these plans, but we were satisfied with our household arrangements. A typical floor plan is reproduced above.

Any child might be happy, we

thought, in these spacious rooms, racing up and down the long corridors, or playing with the nurses. All our staff were fond of children, and enjoyed a good game of ball or hide-and-seek as much as their young charges. No grumpy, elderly nurses in our employ! And nothing but young, delightful housemaids, ready to hand out a bite in the pantry to any hungry child. The employees were considered part of the family, and are carefully listed in these records as 'maidens' rather than 'maids.' The former term I felt gave them a certain dignity and importance. In the latter I thought they might have a sense of discomfort and degradation.

V

For a well-regulated orphanage, the number of house parties planned and successfully carried through was remarkable. Royalty itself was invited — even came without invitation on occasion, as one of my letters shows: —

Queen Mab
385 North 72 St.
Granet
Ohio

O. D. (Ohio Dominion.)

Dear Queen Mab:

Of course you can come to Babiland on Christmas night. If you go to Fairyland I will take you. Bring January and March. Do not have them left out.

Your ever
Fairy
Blossom.

That Christmas house party must have been a tremendous affair, for letters flew back and forth among the various families, the orphans were in 'drills' of all sorts, and it is difficult to understand how any regular work was done in that institution for weeks before or after the party. Annie, a young lady who could not attend because of a previous engagement, was commiserated with by mail, and her situation

discussed thoroughly. She writes to explain: —

Dear Cousin Blossom:

I am so sorry I can't come to Babiland on Xmas night but I had made an engagement before to visit this cousin of mine in Ohio. I want to go to both places very much. Tell Cousin Nottie (Forgetmenot) that Davy got her letter the other day but has not felt well enough to answer it yet. We have not seen Brownie Lightning for some time and we expect to see him very soon too. Goodbye

your Loving Cousin
Annie S. Thorn

There was much routine business: —

To Miss Kathirene Hall
Ofanisilum
Toddling
Babiland

My dear Kathirene:

I hope you are having a very good time. Mrs. White is there I here. You had better give her the south sparerroom because the north and east both have windows that don't close very tight. Do you want me up on Sunday? I want to know because if you don't I want to make another engagement. Tell Sarah that I got her letter yesterday and tell Dr. Bush that he had better not put Dulcimer into the drill because you know he does not learn very quick, Tatania said. Goodbye

Your loving Blossom

Two of the guests of honor were Redcap and his cousin Squirmie, Brownies or Goblins, who lived, according to the heading on their letters, in the '4th Tree, Beach, Woodland.' Their home in this great imaginary beech tree was also a centre of activity, and much correspondence went on between 'Master Redcap' and ourselves.

Dear Fairy Blossom

I recieved your letter the day before next week Sunday. Squirme is not in the drill and can not be at all thank you just the same for asking him. I am in a great hurry as you see.

Goodbye from your friend
Master Redcap.

To add to the holiday excitement in Fairyland, a new baby arrived at the Whites'. We received word of this event over the telephone at the head of our iron beds. The next day a letter arrived from Mrs. White.

Lake Veuw
St. Nod Land

Dear Cousin Blossom:

The baby's hair is brown and fussy, his eyes are coal black. They all liked the name you suggested but Nellie who stuck to Stenton. Now are you satisfied!? He is just the dearest little fellow alive. This is a busyness note so I won't say anything else.

Goodbye and loving wishes,

from your Friend
Mrs. C. H. White

After much discussion in bed the night before, Sue and I had decided on Oliver as the most suitable name for the new arrival. We had telephoned immediately to Mrs. White, so we were gratified to hear that her family almost unanimously accepted our suggestion.

While every week-day night was reserved for a visit to some special land, we left ourselves free on Sundays to roam Fairyland at will. One of these Sunday-night adventures took us to a new district, Cupidland, where we met Saint Valentine and made some new friends. I had taken the precaution to write to him in advance of our visit, and also to hint that we might consider permanent residence in his domain 'when we got a chance.' This, in our minds, was a circumlocution for death. Realizing vaguely that a change must come in our fairy lives, we looked ahead to some new sphere of activity, and naturally wished to select the locality ourselves. The correspondence follows:

St. Valentine
Valantine Court
Cupidland

F. D. (Fairyland Dominion.)

Dear St. Valentine

Perhaps you remember a little fairy that came to your court some time ago. That

was my little sister Forgetmenot. My name is Fairy Blossom, and I am a sister in the Babiland Ofanosilum, and so is Forgetmenot. Our own land is Cloudland; but we are interested in all the other lands too. We want to know if you would like to have us up on Sunday night to look around, for we don't know anyone there.

Goodbye, from

Fairy Blossom.

P. S. We are looking around for a land to live in when we get a chansh. My sister and brother both like Cupidland (I too.)

F. Blossom.

The Saint's answer came promptly, in the handwriting of age.

My dear Fairy Blossom:

I do remember the fairy that came to me. She said she was from Cloudland, and was a great help to my elevs. They begged me to invite her here again, she was so helpful. Of course you can come up on Sunday and I will be pleased to show you around. I hope you will be able to live here always when you get a chansh.

Goodbye, from

St. Valentine.

The result of this visit is not recorded. For my part, a vision of that future life when I 'got a chansh' always included a little cottage residence in some swaying meadow flower, perhaps a wild rose or a stalk of chicory, in some green dell of the inner ring of Fairyland itself.

VI

A small handmade notebook, fastened in the middle with a big pin, bears the following title: —

The Gibil Book,
For Beginners.
By H. W. S.
Blue Room Pub. Co.

Gibil — the *g* is soft — was a rudimentary language of our own, used to keep secret our activities from the grown-up family. The little textbook is only half filled, the task of language-

making evidently having proved too arduous for me or too dull. Vocabularies, numbers, exercises from Gibil into English and English into Gibil, are all there. I cannot remember that any very intensive study went into this language, or that, with the exception of a few sentences, it was ever very much used. 'Kenston res semivoyle' ('Harness the express-wagon') I remember as a sentence in daily use. The other sentences in the Gibil lessons recall nothing to me. But once, I do not doubt, we were all able to translate these exercises into the best Gibil, and gained much satisfaction from our linguistic ability: 'See this bird, it is a skylark — Come and take a walk in the woods.'

Families of thirty-three children were not unheard of in our imaginings. Their names and ages were all written down on paper, the list always thickly interspersed with twins and triplets. After the brief period when we played with dolls, these lists of names took the place of more material toys, and satisfied us just as well. I had my own collection of families, each one ranging usually from boys and girls of seventeen — I could hardly imagine anyone older — down the years to a rapid succession of infants, listed in age as '2, one and a half, one, six months, three months, two months, and one month.' They all had well-considered names, high-sounding or prosaic, but fitting in every case the distinct personality of the child I imagined. With these families I played for hours, sometimes with Sue, often by myself. Lying on my back on the grass, or crouched in the haymow, I planned every detail of life for the thirty or more members of my household, arranging their schooling, their clothes, their visits. When I had other things to do, I folded my family away in my favorite 'blue wallet,' a shabby little leather case which was one of my chief

treasures. I was always careful to write on the outside, 'Preshus paper — do not touch. By order of the B o F' (Band of Fairies).

As we grew a little older, our nightly trips to visit our friends in each country became more infrequent. The correspondence dwindled, and often the little top drawer in the bureau held no letters at all. In building our new house in the country, the convenient stables for the velocipede, the tricycle, and the express wagon were abandoned, to make room for a wider porch. In the Vale of Tauensentha one did not often hear the soft whinnies of our black ponies, kicking up their heels among the pine trees. And more and more often the ferryboats which navigated the garden paths were so late that, impatient, we decided to discontinue the ferry service.

Skirts crept down, pigtails were turned up and tied with a bow, book straps swung larger loads of books. Every morning I choked myself into a stiff Peter Pan collar, and pricked my fingers with safety pins at the back of my shirt waist. School at fourteen was a serious matter, for already there were whispers of college four years ahead.

Intellectually breathless from the plunge, I began algebra, French, Latin, and Greek, and delved deeper into English history and literature. To acquit myself well in class meant hard, almost constant study every afternoon and evening. Sometimes during my brief playtime out of doors I thought fleetingly of the orphanage and wondered what the children were doing; or in the last luminous streaks of sunset over the river I thought I could trace a host of elfin travelers, winging their way to the green dells of Fairyland. Gradually, however, the appalling difficulties of Greek verbs or the mysteries of my dreaded algebra lesson banished my fairy friends to the remote inner places of my mind.

THE OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT

An Appraisal

BY HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

I

It is always with the utmost hesitancy that I attempt to describe and appraise the Oxford Group Movement. This is not at all because the facts are difficult to ascertain and report. On the contrary, anyone passingly familiar with the history of religion who has watched this Movement's extraordinary advance over the past ten years can readily detail its principal features and its underlying assumptions, and suggest their parallels in earlier phenomena of religion. But the most faithful recountal of the facts must fail lamentably to convey a true impression of the Movement's extraordinary character and power to one who has not felt its temper personally. And any estimate of its significance, however honest, will be finally determined by the presuppositions which the appraiser brings to his inquiry.

The protagonists of the Groups are quite right in their contention that the inquirer may come into an adequate understanding of them in only one way — by intimate acquaintance with their life from within. And they would be further justified in contending that, after such acquaintance, one's final attitude will largely reflect prior value-judgments on such basic issues as these: the inner character of true religion, the needs of the human soul, the state of religion in our day, the malaise of civilization and the possi-

bilities for its cure — and what shortcomings may be forgiven in a spiritual strategy of searching criticism and overwhelming vitality. This Movement thrusts itself upon us with a radical and drastic critique of the unchallenged assumptions of most of the readers of these words; not until its critique has been squarely faced is one entitled to give a verdict concerning the Movement.

Thus is suggested the first affirmation about the Oxford Group Movement which I should like to underscore. Any facile and categorical judgment of its importance, whether favorable or unfavorable, is to be dismissed at once as superficial and misleading. Much current comment is either extravagantly laudatory or sharply contemptuous. Neither attitude is sound. The plain truth is that there is probably no spiritual force in the world to-day which is bringing to the lives of hundreds such light and power and freedom and happiness and spiritual certainty — gifts quite beyond the measurement of any human calculus. And there is no contemporary religious movement of similar proportions which, in the judgment of many wise and consecrated persons, is so freighted with danger, self-deception, and even perversion of authentic Christian experience. Just when one has determined to dismiss it from consideration because

of its excesses or its perils or its self-righteousness, one is confronted with a concrete instance of the liberation and empowerment of a defeated and despairing soul, like as not someone within one's own acquaintance. Criticism is silenced, gratitude wells spontaneously, one wonders whether even friendly questioning of so magnificent a work can be justified. Just when one is moved to lend cordial support, one meets an example of bumptious impertinence or pitiable pharisaism or tragic mishandling of a human personality so flagrant that the most tolerant sympathy cannot forgive. Doubts return, sympathy shrivels, one questions whether even qualified approval of the Movement can honestly be given. Clearly we are here face to face with something which eludes easy generalization.

In brief, the Oxford Group Movement is the most baffling religious phenomenon of our time. Nor is this a personal opinion only. Many of the foremost leaders of the Church on both sides of the Atlantic have, in personal conversation, voiced their bewilderment. Never have they encountered a movement which so defied final estimate. Never have they felt themselves so puzzled in deciding their own relationship to a vital religious work.

Our purpose in this paper will be to confront something of the Movement's life-transforming influence, to discover its underlying premises, to enumerate the strictures most frequently brought against it, to review its undeniable points of strength; and then, not to reach a final judgment, but to suggest considerations in terms of which each reader may make his own appraisal.

II

In a moment we shall turn to examine the basic presuppositions and principles of the Groups' work. But our

examination would be in quite false perspective unless we had vividly before us, throughout our inquiry, the pictures of individual persons in whom those principles have wrought a miracle of change. The Movement has its distinctive convictions. But, to win acceptance for them, it depends not at all on argument, but on evidence. And upon one kind of evidence only — lives which have been radically, drastically, gloriously transformed through its influence. Let me mention four or five — those which happen to have come to my attention most recently.

A Southern belle of eight or ten years ago, high-strung as a race horse, undisciplined as the wind, headstrong, selfish, egoistic, the spoiled favorite of an indulgent upbringing, is married to one of the country's powerful business leaders. But life with her has become well-nigh unendurable. Their marriage hangs on the brink of divorce. She comes under the sway of the Groups, largely in the persons of two or three young couples still in their late twenties. She is changed. Not completely changed, to be sure; lifelong habits of unchecked selfishness can be brought fully under control only by years of submission to the Groups' patient but inexorable discipline. But she is a quite different woman. Friends and casual acquaintances cannot fail to note a new gentleness, winsomeness, radiance. For the husband, marriage has become tolerable. He has not been won to the Groups; at least, not yet. But he is happy to have his wife give bountifully from her allowance in support of their work. A tempestuous, moody, unhappy soul has found life. The Movement has won a grateful adherent and generous supporter. There are dozens like her in every circle of fashion in the land.

The minister of a small country parish in northern New England hushes about his usual busy round of

preaching, calling, visiting. To everyone, including two or three fellow clergymen of national prominence who are visitors in his summer congregation, he appears to be the embodiment of energy and buoyancy — an efficient and successful 'small-town preacher.' Four or five youthful members of the Groups, also on summer holiday, come to his village. They hold one informal meeting to which the local minister is naturally invited. The next day he goes about his work as usual. But to a friend he confides that he had been on the point of chucking the whole business. Unknown to everyone, his inner life had been harried to the verge of despair by some secret difficulty — quite probably a problem of sex or of self-consciousness or of marital tension. One brief contact with the message of these young Groupers has altered the whole outlook. He believes he can now go on.

A charming boy and girl in near-by colleges are engaged. They are deeply devoted. But across the lad's spirit hovers a shadow of some secret worry which he cannot reveal to his fiancée. She is deeply troubled and confides her anxiety to the president of her college and other faculty friends. They share her concern, but are impotent to help her. The boy meets a younger leader of the Groups. From a Group meeting he comes to his fiancée to lay bare to her the loathsome experience or habit which his conscience could not shake. She is horrified, as are her spinster advisors. But the two lovers return to the Group, and within that warm, understanding, healing fellowship the past is purged and forgiven, and the two discover together hitherto unknown depths of unity and certainty.

A spoiled son of a wealthy and fashionable Middle Western family is rapidly becoming a drunken sot. Everything to rid him of the habit has been tried — rest, change, cures, psy-

chiatry. Family and friends have practically surrendered hope. Somehow or other he comes in touch with a Group. The grip of drink falls from him like a foul garment. He walks in and out of the familiar streets and associations a liberated, exultant freeman — 'a new creature.' To relatives and friends he writes unaffectedly to tell of his release and to share with them this good thing which he has found.

A distinguished professor in a woman's college is a solitary figure in the community — aloof, sophisticated, bitingly cynical, apparently completely self-satisfied. As he walks across the campus he seldom notices either colleagues or students. One morning they are astounded to meet a gay, friendly, radiant, though boyishly shy, man. In an hour the word has gone through the campus that Professor B—— is a 'new person.' The preceding week-end he had been enticed to a house party of the Oxford Group Movement. He has been 'changed.' Life from that day has been entirely different.

An eager young college graduate comes up to theological seminary. He has a sense for the reality of vital religion, but no personal possession of it. Here he expects to discover quintessential religion, not only in theory, but in incarnation. If the seminary is to prepare him to introduce others to religion's beauty and power all his life long, surely its first responsibility is to aid living religion to come to birth within his own experience. Slowly a mood of disillusionment overtakes him. He is face to face with that hiatus between profession and practice, between affirmation and apprehension, between past certainty and present experience, which is the despair of sincere spiritual leadership. Much of the religion about him is musty with familiar repetition; it speaks habitually in the past tense; it is illumined by the dim twilight of a fading memory rather than by the

brilliance of a living flame. Then he visits a meeting of the Groups. He knows of the Movement as a strange fanatic religion to be observed by all objective students of religious phenomena. He is repelled by its naïve ideology, its crude confidences, its easy familiarity with the sacred and profound. But he is driven to recognize an undertone of reality; here is something which he had expected as the first gift of his own training, and has not found. He returns for further exposure. Slowly, as his prejudices are overcome, he discovers 'real religion' coming to life within his own soul. He does not join the Movement. But he confesses candidly that its contribution to his life is of more importance than all his studies.

One type of Group influence has been omitted from our illustrations. But in my judgment one of the most remarkable things the Movement is accomplishing is its ministry to families. Some families have been sadly rifted on the issue of loyalty to the Groups; here the parallel to Christian Science is striking. But in many families one after another of the members has been won to allegiance, until a wholly new understanding and unity have taken possession of the household. The outcome is not merely changed individuals, but changed homes.

These instances have been selected quite at random, just as they have been reported to me as I have traveled about in the course of the past twelvemonth. Similar examples could be multiplied many times over, and in much more striking circumstances. Here they are, in almost every city in America and in almost every country in the world — dozens, hundreds, almost thousands of them, all sorts and conditions and ages of men and women, who would rise up to declare that their contact with the Oxford Group Movement has meant to them the difference between futility,

harrowing psychic suffering, despair, and a new existence of freedom, gladness, comradeship, spiritual exaltation. These are the evidences to which the leaders of the Movement would point in vindication of their premises and their principles. These are the grounds of their certainty that they may yet effect the spiritual rehabilitation of our generation and even of our ailing civilization.

III

The distinguishing characteristics of the Oxford Group Movement, both its message and its methods, are by now widely known.¹

The fundamental premise which determines every aspect of its emphasis and work is this conviction — that in the modern world the overwhelming majority of folk have sadly missed the way. Many of them are consciously unhappy, inwardly defeated, and insulated from their fellows by secret barriers of sham, impurity, or fear. Others are pitifully superficial, selfish, and futile. A very few are sincere, but palpably inadequate. For all alike, the need is for a radical and revolutionary experience of personal religion. For all alike, there is possible a new life of hitherto unknown power and unbelievable satisfaction.

But there is only one avenue of access to that higher life. It is through a radical purging of inner unreality and the full and final surrender of one's whole self, all that one is and all that one possesses, to the imperious command of the Living God. From that surrender, when complete and unreversed, will follow release from defeat or ennui and the gift of utterly new joy and strength. The old life will be cast away; the old harrowing problems will dissolve; one will stand free from the

¹ Something of the origin and history of the Movement has been given in an earlier article, in the July *Atlantic*. — EDITOR

shackles of temptation, self-consciousness, selfishness; for the first time in one's life, one will know the meaning of spiritual freedom. All that one has heard with the hearing of the ears about the life of religion, all that one has dismissed as the familiar exaggeration of religious propagandists or a naïve faith no longer possible for intelligent moderns — all this will come vividly alive within one's own soul. One now *knows*, with a certainty for which there is no parallel, the truth of religion's claims — the absolutely unique character of the dedicated life, the vivid and continuous awareness of God's presence, the priceless worth of complete fellowship with Him, the service which is perfect freedom.

Together with these results, surrender will also bring two quite definite gifts — direct and specific instructions from God Himself for every detail of daily speech and life (what the Groups term 'guidance'); and the ability to bring others into the same transforming experience. Indeed, just as the only way of entrance into the new life is through complete surrender, so there is one way and one way only by which that new life may be maintained vivid and growing. It is through revealing one's own discoveries in intimate disclosure to others and thus winning them to similar surrender and rebirth. Finally, the matrix within which this whole process of life transformation in its three phases — surrender of self, continuance in complete commitment, the winning of others — can best take place is an intimate comradeship of completely like-minded and like-dedicated persons.

There is little distinctively novel in all this. But there is something distinctly unusual in the incisive, searching, and exacting meaning which is put into the familiar Christian call to 'surrender.' Half-concealed and wholly unrecognized areas of selfishness and

willfulness, as well as the grosser sins, are laid bare. There is no relaxation of insistent pressure until every one of these is confessed and abjured, and the human spirit stands at last chastened and naked before the greater Purpose of God with no desire or claim on life other than 'Thy will be done.' Moreover, in contrast to most evangelistic emphases, 'surrender' with the Group Movement is not a condition achieved in one cataclysmic experience. As acquaintance with the Movement deepens, more and more unsundered territory in one's life is discovered. The Will of God is revealed as increasingly exacting in its demand for unconditioned self-giving. During the early months, at least, the experience of surrender is repeated over and over again. Sometimes recessions from first enthusiasm occur as the new member is unwilling to face these further and more demanding commitments. No one, no matter how long or seasoned or 'eminent' in the Christian experience, is immune from the necessity of completely new self-surrenders. And so it happens that not a few middle-aged ministers, even bishops, have found their lives transformed through the ministry of the Oxford Groups. Is it cause for wonder that forth from its testing discipline comes an ever-increasing succession of indomitable evangelists?

Here, then, is the first mark which distinguishes the Oxford Group Movement from familiar Christianity. It takes with intense seriousness what every good Christian professes. And, by the same token, it actually produces in experience the fruits which every minister promises but seldom expects to see realized.

Thirty leaders of the Canadian Church who have followed closely the recent campaigns there have summarized the central assumptions of the Groups' work in these six points: —

1. *Men are sinners.*
2. *Men can be changed.*
3. *Confession is prerequisite to change.*
4. *The changed soul has direct access to God.*
5. *The Age of Miracles has returned.*
6. *Those who have been 'changed' must 'change' others.²*

This summary demands supplementation at only one point. But it is the point which many observers regard as the greatest single secret of the Movement's effectiveness — *the absolutely central place which 'the Group' holds in its mediation of religion.* The function of 'the Group' is threefold. It is the school for effective training of those newly come into the Movement. It is the means for the continuous discipline and nurture of every member, experienced and novitiate alike. It is the organ of strategy through which all the Movement's work of public propaganda is done.

The Groups have no formal membership and no fixed conditions for admission. But their fellowship far surpasses in intimacy, in frankness, in mutual understanding and devotion, in unshakable loyalty, any other communities of which I know — the Salvation Army, a social fraternity, a secret cult, a monastic order of the most exacting requirements. Many adherents would declare that the greatest single gift which has come to them from their contact with the Movement is this unique human comradeship.

Central reliance upon the influence of 'the Group' is part of the Movement's conscious philosophy. Most people, it is said, are spiritually lonely and disheartened. Typical Protestantism is hopelessly individualistic, while

Anglicanism and Romanism provide artificial and inadequate fellowships. In these times of spiritual aridity, at least, it is quite impossible for the average person, especially one new to the life of religion, to maintain a vigorous, healthy, and growing Christian experience without the continuous support of a closely welded and intimate communion. To each member, the life of the Group supplies two things, discipline and inspiration — a severe and unremitting check upon the carelessness, the cowardice, the self-excuse, the unrestrained impulse of the individual; and constant and unfailing encouragement in the face of one's own faithlessness and for the winning of others.

But the genius of 'the Group' is not merely in its gifts of discipline and inspiration to the individual member. The group itself is the key factor in the Movement's programme of expansion. It is a matter of principle that a member of the Movement almost never appears to represent it alone. If he is requested to present the message of the Groups, he will insist on bringing several colleagues even though they be given no opportunity to speak. If he is invited to an entirely informal gathering where there is to be no speech making, he will ask the privilege of being accompanied by several fellow members, preferably as many as the number of the other guests expected. The tactics of this are obvious. If one representative is 'off form,' others will strike the effective note; the support of comrades strengthens each and holds him to his best; the experience is good training for the newer members; the presence of several facilitates the breaking of the larger gathering into the individual conferences which are the main objective. Of course this strategy is merely multiplied in the 'teams' of from a dozen to a hundred who visit a city or tour a continent. It is one of the

² *The Challenge of the Oxford Group Movement — An Attempt at Appraisal*, by the Committee of Thirty. This is perhaps the most careful and accurate account of the Movement in print. To be obtained from the Ryerson Press, Toronto, at ten cents a copy. — AUTHOR

most important elements in the power of the Movement.

Until recently this, in summary, has been the message which the Oxford Group Movement has been bringing into the life of the modern world. It has been a message directed to individual men and women, a promise of salvage for individual souls. Latterly a quite new emphasis has been evident. The propaganda is now invariably set in a world reference. The analysis has been widened from individual need to humanity's need. It is the ills of society, the threatened disintegration of our civilization, which are the talking points in enlisting initial interest. 'The modern world — disillusioned, chaotic, feverish — demands a solution adequate to its disorder.' And it is the salvage of civilization, nothing less, which the Movement now believes it may be the instrument to effect.

This change of emphasis is undoubtedly in part a direct rejoinder to criticisms of blindness to social issues. In part it is an accommodation to a changed focus of popular attention — from longing for personal self-fulfillment to concern for society's fate. In part it indicates a growing consciousness of power and significance. It has always been Dr. Buchman's conviction that the Movement would ultimately remake the Church and society.

But, though the setting of the message has altered, its content and central stress are essentially the same. It is 'changed lives' which are to be 'the raw material of the new world order.' 'A changed social order depends upon changed individuals. As men and women are turned from self-centredness born of selfishness to God-centredness based on faith, social ills are drastically dealt with and eradicated.'

Thus the avowed purpose of this Movement is to reproduce in twentieth-century life what is conceived to have been the essential experience of original

Christianity. Until recently the American adherents have called themselves the 'First Century Christian Fellowship' — a far happier title than the misleading, if not dishonest, name, 'Oxford Group Movement.'

Christianity is known as, above all, a religion of power. It commands power to free the most dispirited and defeated men and women from failure and impotence and the tethering shackles of self-consciousness or sin. Here lies its strongest appeal to the increasing thousands who skirt the fringes of modern life, overshadowed by nervous disorders, morbidity, inferiority, fear, moral defeat. For such lives it can do what no other contemporary influence with which I am familiar seems able to accomplish. It has taken dozens of shattered spirits for whom the Church and psychiatry could do nothing, and has restored them to health and self-mastery and usefulness. But it would be a serious misinterpretation to conceive its mission as directed solely to the spiritually ill. Equally vigorous is its proclamation that Christianity has power to lift quite average and reasonably happy men and women into rare beauty of life and exceptional force of leadership. Here lies, perhaps, the Movement's most striking contribution to the Christian cause in our day — the remarkable stream of young and attractive persons, steeled in self-discipline and afire with vital and contagious faith, whom it has thrust forth into the desperation of these times.

IV

What are the misgivings most frequently voiced about a work which is bringing such obvious benefit to hundreds?

1. *The Movement is accused of emotionalism and an exaggerated and unwholesome emphasis upon the problems of sex.*

On the last point it is important that a clear word be said. Let me state, from rather intimate knowledge of its work over fifteen years, that in the early days of the Movement the charge had some justification. Sex difficulty was often the first, and sometimes almost the central, emphasis in its message. Furthermore, the attitude of some of the leaders on the question was not, and is not to-day, as completely sound and healthy as one might wish. It is well known how subtle are the powerful basic emotions in achieving expression. It is doubtful whether those who have themselves been delivered from acute emotional difficulty in any area are well equipped to aid others to the most normal view of, and adjustment to, that problem. On the other hand, latterly a determined effort has brought this element in the Groups' message into much better balance, has largely eliminated confessions of sex difficulties from public meetings, and has attained a much sounder attitude in the whole matter.

Let me add emphatically that in my judgment the Oxford Group Movement is much less open to criticism in its handling of sex than most schools of contemporary psychiatry and psychology. It is ironical that these two powerful agencies of psychic healing which tend to regard each other with deep suspicion — psychiatry and the Oxford Group Movement — should be at one in at least two regards: their correct understanding of the enormous part which sex plays in the personal difficulties of most people, and their tendency to intensify these problems for many by disproportionate emphasis upon them.

On the more general charge of emotionalism, it is more difficult to give a clear judgment. That there is a rich undercurrent of strong, sometimes intense, emotion in the meetings of the Groups and in the daily life of their

members cannot be denied. That this is unhealthy or undesirable is a very different question. It is organic to the gayety, the buoyant good humor, the exuberant vitality, which are other marked features. Intense emotion has usually been an accompaniment of religious conversion, as indeed of most other human experiences of profound meaning. Radical transformations of life habits are not effected without drastic interior readjustments; introduction to a wholly new realm of experience is hardly to be expected without vivid spiritual elation.

But there is a deeper issue here. The Groups are in conscious and deliberate reaction from the dominant mood of the passing era — the arid intellectualism, the cheap sophistication, the withering and throttling self-centredness and self-consciousness, the futile lust for self-expression and self-realization, which have cursed the modern temper, and, they would claim, have brought on well-nigh universal maladjustment. In this reaction the Oxford Group Movement is but one current in a vast wave which, in very varied forms, is overwhelming the 'modern mood' (psychiatry again, Fascism, and Communism).³ This is an issue on

³ 'The Group is one manifestation of a spirit which is very widespread among students and young people generally at the present day. The Communist movement in Russia and elsewhere, the Nazi movement in Germany, and various "youth movements" of different kinds, all have this same general character. They represent a reaction against the individualism and self-sufficiency which was the ideal of the Europe that fell into ruins in 1914. . . . The whole student life of the world has set out upon a new adventure, the adventure of group-heroisms and group-loyalties, in the service of ideals, some higher and some lower, but all alike a challenge to systems and selfishnesses that have had their day. . . . Everywhere we see young people willing, as we older people were never willing, to look for leadership, and to accept discipline and sacrifice in following those who will lead the way.' — Canon L. W. Grensted, in *Oxford and the Groups*, pp. 198-199.

which one's final attitude will be determined by underlying presuppositions — in this instance, one's view of the place of emotion in life and its proper expression.

2. *It is said that the Movement's understanding of Christianity is partial and deficient.*

This criticism is, of course, in direct contradiction to the Groups' own claim to reproduce in our time the life of original Christianity. As a matter of fact, it is open to serious question how far the Movement is faithful to characteristic early Christianity. It has taken the Book of the Acts as its principal guide. The religion it aims to reproduce is that there described. This suggests the inspiration and authority for a number of its most distinctive features — its practice of 'guidance' (an element in early Christian experience which is prominent in the Acts but appears in such startling form nowhere else in the New Testament); its programme of peripatetic evangelism; its tense apocalypticism. One misses from this Movement the intellectual rigor, the common-sense practicality, the broad catholicity, the rugged realism of Paul, the profound wisdom of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the homely ethics of the Book of James, the inclusive sympathy of the Gospel according to Luke — all authentic elements in the first-century Christian fellowship. But that the Movement has recovered and caught into its inmost experience much of the power and faith of the early Christians cannot be questioned.

3. *The Movement is held to be one-sided, childish, and inadequate in its ideology.*

Here it finds itself buffeted between Scylla and Charybdis. To enthusiasts for social transformation it talks too much of God and individual need, too little of the pressing social demands upon religion. To European divines it

speaks too little of God, the Cross, the Church, too much of man's interior desires and satisfactions and achievements. To Philadelphia Presbyterians its theology is too meagre, too tainted with Modernism. (Who, save the Angel Gabriel, could hope to satisfy Philadelphia Presbyterianism!) To 'intellectuals' its whole point of view is superstitious, jejune, absurd.

Amid such a welter of opinion, it is not easy to disengage truth. The fairest statement would seem to be somewhat as follows: —

First, with respect to theology. The Movement conceives its primary task to be to *introduce* men and women to the life of religion. At first, at least, it does not profess to thrust its complete message before them. Meat in its proper time, but for babes spiritual milk. Moreover, until quite lately, the Movement has not been greatly interested in theology;⁴ thus it has been able to embrace persons of fairly diverse views. Nevertheless it is tremendously concerned about God and people's recognition of Him. Beneath its every practice there is a very large measure of theological presupposition which can readily be discovered and displayed — a theological position, if you will. That position may fairly be defined as catholic Protestant conservatism. With the single exception of the distinctive doctrine of 'guidance,' there is almost nothing in its belief or message to which exception would have been taken by any of the great evangelistic efforts of Protestantism, or which is not assumed in almost every conservative pulpit in the land to-day — the sovereignty and power of God, the reality of sin, the necessity of complete individual surrender, the transforming

⁴ The first serious theological work by a member of the Movement has recently appeared — Canon Grensted's *The Person of Christ*. It has been well described as 'a brave, original book, full of the most pure and infectious faith.' — AUTHOR

power of Christ, the atoning efficacy of His Cross, the freedom and radiance of the transformed life, the sustenance of prayer, the obligation to witness for Christ. The Groups would seek fresh wordings, but the content would be akin. The contrast is not in the content of the assumptions, but in the practical meaning which is poured into them, the insistence with which they are driven home, and the actual realization of the promised rewards.

Recently, as noted above, the Movement has been at great pains to refute the allegation that it occupies itself exclusively with the intricacies of personal experience to the neglect of social evil and sin. As proof of its power to heal social ills at their very roots, attention is called to the quite astounding impact upon racial attitudes in that miasma of racial antagonism — South Africa. On the larger issues of economic and social reconstruction, the Movement has never given a hint of its ideal. Indeed, it would make no claim to have one. It proposes to deal with that problem, like all others, through converted individuals 'under the guidance of God.' However, it is not presumptuous to hazard that the social order toward which it would be 'guided' would be worked out in terms of a benevolent paternalism and the generous stewardship of possessions, *not* in terms of a radical reconstruction of the social structure or a sacrificial redistribution of wealth.

Here, likewise, one's estimate of the adequacy of its social message will reflect one's premises. What the Movement is insisting is that there is no hope for escape from civilization's threatened disintegration *along any road*, unless it be preceded by radical personal conversion altering to their foundations men's controlling attitudes toward the whole problem. No intelligent student of public affairs is naïve enough to believe, as many of the Group do, that

spiritual revival in itself will save our society. But there is a growing number who wonder whether, without the preparation of spiritual revival, anything else can.

To many critics, far more damning than anything said or left unsaid about social theory is the actual social practice of the Groups and especially of their peripatetic leadership. A Movement which appears to revel in luxury, to live comfortably on the largesse of great wealth, and to take delight in good food, smart dress, fashionable appointments, social prestige, and the extravagances of unthinking privilege can hardly expect to deal adequately with the clamant injustices of existing society, or to speak with sincerity and power to the dispossessed. Much is made of the reproduction of first-century Christianity; apparently it is not felt necessary to take note of the manner of life of those early Christians.

We come finally to the mooted question of 'guidance.' Four statements about it I should like to make, summarily and dogmatically.

(a) Belief that God may and does give specific directions for detailed decisions in individual lives is not novel to the Group Movement. It has marked vital Christianity throughout its history. I cite a single illustration from as recently as fifty years ago. Recounting the habitual practice of New England Friends in his boyhood, Rufus Jones says, 'Everybody at home, as well as many of our visitors, believed implicitly in immediate divine guidance. Those who went out from our meeting to do extended religious service always seemed as directly selected for these momentous missions as were prophets of an earlier time. . . . The most wonderful thing was the way in which God took care of them and told them what to do and say in every place where they went.'

(b) 'Guidance' as it is actually prac-

tised by members of the Group Movement, even its most influential leaders, is often a travesty on the truest Christian tradition and a discredit of worthy religion. The formal expositions of the Movement's belief are usually sane and persuasive;⁵ the employment of the belief is sometimes childish and absurd. While sound logic indicates that the divine attention envisions all that concerns each life's welfare, it does not follow that God desires to give explicit direction for each decision and action. Indeed it is clearly part of the divine intention that men should develop self-achieved discretion which shall prepare them to become fellow workmen, not robots, in the divine undertakings. The key in the whole matter of guidance is to take with utmost seriousness Jesus' designation of God as 'Father' — with its implication of a gracious restraint in the divine interference and a parental wisdom in the divine assistance, as well as its assurance of an un-failing divine concern.

(c) There is great value in the technique of personal meditation which the Groups have cultivated, without acceptance of their supernatural interpretation. In any event, it is quite possible that in the Groups' practice of 'guidance' at its best — an eager mind, purified by rigorous religious discipline, relaxed yet alert, expectantly open to the most delicate suggestion of the highest — the divine direction for human life may be more surely known than in any other way.

(d) But here, once more, deeper issues are involved than appear in most arguments about 'guidance.' This practice is the Movement's most striking proclamation of a living and regnant God. However misguided may be the detailed application, in the main contention — that God is a living, guiding

Power who knows intimately every human life in its every experience, who holds for each life at every moment a vision and a hope which are its highest possibility and His Purpose, and who is prepared to reveal that Purpose to those who earnestly desire it — in this the clear logic of the matter is with the Oxford Groups. The plain truth is that the God of practical faith in our modern churches, even the God of the clergy, is no such Power, but a pitiful travesty upon the Majestic Sovereign of profound religion. This the Groups fully understand. Their confidence in divine guidance is working faith in a living Divine Reality. In comparison with the prevailing religion which they are seeking to displace, they are more right than wrong.

4. *It is claimed that the Movement is inexcusably blind to its own shortcomings, and that it encourages dishonest thinking, pharisaism, and spiritual arrogance in those long under its influence.* In brief, its failings are less in doctrine or method than in personal ethical sensitivity.

Of these charges I have said something in an earlier paper. It is unnecessary to reconsider them at length here.

That there is truth, too much truth, in these allegations, it would be futile to deny. A very good example of questionable honesty is the adoption of the Movement's present name, deeply and justly resented as it is by many Oxford men. The Movement is, of course, American in origin. But from the beginning Dr. Buchman had cherished a determined desire to link it with one of the great British universities, with the obvious accession of prestige and general appeal. He had established its British headquarters in Oxford, but it had little grip and less recognition in the life of the university. A team of followers that happened to be composed largely of Oxford men working in South Africa were referred to as 'the Oxford group.' It was a quite casual

⁵ See especially Eleanor Forde, *The Guidance of God*, an official statement of the Groups' position. — AUTHOR

designation. The inappropriateness of the title and the inevitable confusion with the great Oxford Movement, if this name should become attached to the new work, were obvious enough. Common decency would have dictated a studied effort to discountenance its use. On the contrary the Movement seized upon it, fostered reference to it on every possible occasion in spite of indignant protest from a united Oxford, quietly buried the previously chosen title, the 'First Century Christian Fellowship,' and gradually assumed 'the Oxford Group' or 'the Oxford Group Movement' as its official title.

About much of the functioning of the Movement there is opportunism, the sacrifice of complete candor to expediency, subtle scheming under the guise of sound strategy, an exaggerated self-importance and tendency to high-handed practice because of that importance — characteristics aptly described as 'Jesuitical.' Of one of the foremost leaders, a youthful admirer once said, 'He is the most powerful personality I have ever met; but he never reminds me of Jesus Christ.' An Oxford don who has observed the work there sympathetically over ten years gives it as his judgment that the first impact of the Groups upon any life is almost always helpful and desirable; but that long association almost always induces highly regrettable qualities of spiritual pride, narrowness, hypersensitiveness, self-concern. His is, I think, an acute observation.

It is because of these defects that many persons, otherwise sympathetic, find it impossible to give wholehearted support to this work.

V

So much for the debit account. What, in briefest summary, are its indisputable points of strength? Here I can

hardly do better than beg leave to rephrase what I wrote some five years ago; these features still represent its great challenge.

The Group Movement introduces men to real religion. I shall not try to explain that statement more fully. For, as Dean Sperry says, none of us ever loses the childlike capacity to recognize real religion in a fellow human being when we meet it. The Groups do introduce men to real religion. In part, this is due to the fact that, in contrast to most liberal Christianity, their God is a Living God — One with whom each man may have intimate personal relation and who is the most certain active force in a living universe. For real religion has always stood for the certainty that God is not the final postulate of philosophy reached by straining thought to its uttermost belief, but the central and primal fact of the world and of our experience.

It faces the facts of personal life courageously. It is a true claim that the leaders of this movement probably know better and understand better the inner lives of men and women of all types and backgrounds than any similar group within the Christian Church. And it is a knowledge coupled to a definite rationale of how these lives may be changed.

Its challenge is to absolute consecration. This, I am convinced, is the main source of its real and great power. It faces men with a greater challenge than they have ever known elsewhere. It lifts before them a more romantic and alluring conception of life than any other contemporary religious movement. It holds men to their highest and best more rigorously and mercilessly than any Christian group I know. No man ever comes into intimate contact with it or its followers when they are in its best spirit without a searching challenge to his own life. I think I may safely add that most of those of my ac-

quaintance who have been intimately associated with the Group Movement, many of them now definitely outside its ranks, would be inclined to say that the highest vision of the Christian life and the most inspiring incidents of Christian experience which they have known came to them through the Groups. That is no mean tribute.

It has tremendous practical power to transform and redirect life. This is the final fact — and it is a fact — for which any interpretation of the Oxford Group must render an account. One concludes, confronting that steadily increasing company of liberated, joyous, and confident crusaders for vital religion who would wish to record their simple testimony, that most of life's richest and holiest meaning has been the gift to them of this work.

VI

We said that one's final estimate of the Oxford Group Movement would be largely determined by certain underlying presuppositions. Some of these have emerged in the course of the discussion. It is now time to try to state these presuppositions. They are, mainly, three.

1. *Regarding the needs of the human soul and the character of true religion.* Is it true, as the Groups maintain, that vast numbers of people in to-day's life are morally ill and spiritually famished, and that the only satisfaction of their need is through vital personal religion? Is it true that most of what passes for religion in our day is a travesty, and that the prevailing religion of the churches is sterile and unreal — unsound in its working belief in God, insincere in the hiatus between what it professes and what it really attempts to live, and pitifully inadequate to the spiritual demands of the age? Is it true

that vital religion invariably demands absolute sovereignty over life, displacing all lesser loyalties and drawing them under its command? Is it true that the life to which Christianity should introduce men is utterly different from all ordinary experience, and that in it alone is life's fulfillment for Everyman?

2. *Regarding the state of contemporary society and the possibilities of its salvage.* Is it true that our civilization is tottering in imminent peril of mortal collapse, and that its illness is, fundamentally, not political and economic, but spiritual? Is it true that we have been brought into our present unhappy distress by the whole character of 'modern life' — its false goals, its pitiable pretense of human self-sufficiency, its willful egotism, selfishness, and self-destructive follies? Is it true that there is no promise of escape from our threatened fate except through radical social 'conversion' — that is, a complete about-face from the character and habits of 'modern life' — and unless the way be prepared by world-wide spiritual revival? Is it true that there is no organized force abroad to-day which gives hope of the needed deliverance save the Oxford Group Movement?

3. *Regarding the shortcomings which may be overlooked and forgiven in a work with such daring purpose and such desperately difficult mission.* Here each person, deeply concerned for the destiny of our society, must form his own judgment. The final, and possibly the most important, question is: Is there reasonable expectation that the present failings of the Movement — in message, in method, and in personal character — will be corrected through deepening experience and the influence of older and wiser leaders lately drawn within its fellowship? Only the future can answer that question.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

MISCELLANY. II

RADIO NOTE

*We've grown so casual and so democratic
With interstellar space, we must prepare
To hear some night, in wildly stuttering static:
Stand by! Archangel Gabriel on the air!*

WAR TALK

*We talk, and talk, and talk; our red-hot words
Are beaten into cannon balls and swords . . .
And presently a million boys lie dead
With all the words they had to say, unsaid.*

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

*Locked in a bare cell with the Holy Ghost,
He fought his fellow prisoner all night.
Never two warriors closed in such a fight . . .
Never one fighter failed at such a cost.*

CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE

*Good Saint, they've housed you now in costly
stone,
Great soaring arch and plinth and polished
rock —
You who in exile, beggared and alone,
Reported Heaven itself from one bare rock.*

LADY PATRIOT, HOMING INTO HARBOR

*She hailed America, declared her pride,
Her love, declared our flag should never fall,
Declared for this our fathers fully died —
But, disembarking, scarce declared at all.*

NANCY BYRD TURNER

WHY NOT INTERFERE WITH NATURE?

THE fear of interfering with Nature is an ancient spectre which still haunts the minds of men. I say 'of men' advisedly, for women have ever been more willing than men to risk the displeasure of this forbidding phantom. Perhaps they inherit this superior courage from their ancestral Mother

Eve, who certainly had no inhibitions in such matters.

From the dawn of civilization until the mid-morning of the Machine Age, every newly invented device of the creative artificer was denounced by guardians of tribal *mores* on the ground that it was a sacrilegious interference with Nature. When, for example, the first locomotive drew the first carload of passengers over the rails at a speed of ten miles an hour, there was a fearful outcry against the impiety of the proceeding. It was asserted that if God had intended men to travel at this awesome speed He would have endowed them with wings. Of course the very persons who raised this outcry were quite used to riding in carriages drawn by horses and rolling on wheels. And of course they were unmindful that Nature had not domesticated the horse, nor appended wheels to the human frame.

The Machine Age has domesticated the *deus ex machina* and set him to work in an industrial laboratory. No longer does he solve human problems by interfering with humans, as he used to do; instead, he reveals to humans the secrets of Nature and shows them how to outwit her by subtle and skillful methods of interference. These achievements are the glory and the pride of our age. In commerce and industry, in agriculture and husbandry, in science (both pure and applied), and in several other fields, the men who depart from traditional ways and make experimental tests of unorthodox theories are no longer regarded as heretics, but are crowned with honor and pictured in rotogravure.

But the ancient spectre still haunts the minds of men. Banished from the realm of practical affairs, it haunts with heightened effect the more important realms of man's personal and social affairs. Let any courageous innovator suggest an effective method of preventing the propagation of subnormal persons, or of controlling the propagation of normal persons, of providing

release from prolonged and hopeless suffering for the physically defective infant or for any person in the late stages of an incurable and painful disease, or let the courageous innovator suggest any other new and radical method of dealing with any vital problem of human relations, and behold: the spectre! *It is interfering with Nature.*

And so it is. But the word 'interfere' has been made to carry a burden of obloquy which does not belong to it. It may, indeed, be used to denote officious and impertinent meddling, but it may also be used with equal accuracy to denote the exercise of rightful authority or rightful privilege. In this sense it may imply co-operation and not opposition.

Nature has ever given her richest gifts to those who have interfered with her intelligently and coöperatively. Every domesticated animal, every cultivated flower, fruit, and vegetable, is the result of man's intelligent interference with Nature. So are his houses and clothes, his spectacles and telescopes, his radios and his airplanes, and everything else that he has added to his primitive heritage, including his third set of teeth.

But we do not yet grant the authority of intelligence to determine our individual rights, or to settle our social problems. The pre-war father upbraids his post-war daughter for using rouge and lipstick.

'But, Father, what reason have you against my using them? They really do make me look more beautiful.'

'I don't agree with you. They give you an artificial look which takes away from the natural beauty of your face.'

'But you shave, Daddy. You don't let the hair grow all over your face the way it naturally would.'

'That's a very different matter! But if you can't see the difference there's no use talking to you.'

Father's *reason*, like most of our own reasons, is not a matter of intelligence, but of personal prejudice.

I called on such a father a few days ago. He is a 'poor white' and lives on a little farm a few miles out of the city. The school nurse had reported to me that this man's seven-year-old daughter needed quite desperately to have her tonsils re-

moved. The father had refused his consent and had sent back a threatening message to the nurse. She urged me to go and talk with him.

I talked with him for an hour, standing in the hot sun outside his mountain cabin. He was leading a dilapidated mule out of a dilapidated shed when I came to his clearing, and we stood there between the shed and the cabin, talking. After a full hour of explaining and arguing, I gave it up.

'I'm sorry, Mr. Crang,' I said. 'But perhaps you will change your mind before the school term ends.'

'Well, I won't,' he replied, testily. 'And nothing's going to make me. It's interferin' with Nacher and I won't stand for 't.'

He spat out a stream of tobacco juice with conclusive vehemence, swung a lean leg over his mule's back, and rode off without another word.

'Any luck with old Crang?' asked the school nurse, looking in at my office the next morning.

I told her of my call, and of Crang's concluding remarks, and of his riding off in sullen silence on his ancient mule.

'So he's opposed to "interferin' with Nacher," is he?' asked the nurse, and I saw a gleam of humor in her blue eyes. 'And yet you say he rode off on a mule!'

After she had gone, laughing, out of the room, I sat there for a while chuckling, and wishing to heaven I had thought of the mule when I was talking to Crang.

The ancient spectre still haunts the minds of men, but I know now that it is a doomed spectre. Its doom is assured, not by Science and not by the Machine, but by laughter — perhaps by the laughter of women.

Let the reformer no longer appeal to the intelligence of the multitudes; let him rather appeal to their sense of humor. Instead of attempting argument to prove the reasonableness of his proposal, let him make a realistic picture of the stubborn mountaineer sitting astride his serviceable mule and vehemently denouncing any attempt of Man to interfere with Nature.

And as for our *right* to interfere with Nature, I, personally, don't see why we should not interfere with her, considering how much she interferes with us.

THE AUGURIES OF PHUDD

In this remote up-state region where I live, and especially in this secluded dale that lies at the foot of the hill known to local historians by the thunderous name of Phudd, the inhabitants are weather prophets. The farmer from whom we get our milk and eggs and broilers can always and unhesitatingly tell me, when I appear with my milk pail at 7.30, what kind of weather is to be expected during the day. The old Dutch lady who is our neighbor a mile to the south, and who contributes the big-leaved bitter lettuces for our salads, is prepared at any time to let fall oracular and entirely complacent pronouncements concerning the likelihood of rain. Even the occasional road mender who comes to tinker hopelessly but genially with the surface of our R.F.D. route can furnish prophecies replete with assurance.

The impressive feature of this soothsaying is the extraordinary accuracy of its rustic practitioners. I remember that when we lived on Cape Cod we were perpetually amused to hear the solemn and always ready prognostications of the ancient mariners who were our neighbors, and to note how almost unexceptionally the prophets proved to be entirely mistaken. But there, of course, the signs and omens upon which our informants relied were to some degree scientific. It was upon such sound phenomena as wind direction and tide height and 'the look of the glass' that these fishermen made their notably erroneous calculations. Here, in the countryside of Phudd, our auguries are simpler. They are such as would have delighted the late Charles Fort, that worrier of scientists who was so fervently championed by Theodore Dreiser, and they derive — all of them — from the simplest aspects of elemental earth. Phudd Prophets have none of that complex paraphernalia by which metropolitan weather bureaus are enabled to send out their predictions, but this lack, instead of weakening, rather enhances the Delphic assurance with which the prophets speak. Our friends here — these sturdy and earth-rooted Dutchmen whom nothing less than a natural cataclysm can move from the farms on which they were born — these friends of ours mistrust the mechanical divinations

of city prophets, even as they mistrust electricity and ice boxes. To the weather omens furnished by cogs and chemicals and retorts and barometers they prefer the evidence of such venerable signs as, for example, frogs.

At noon of one day about two weeks ago there was no cloud in the sky. A warm sun lay across the pastures, and a fresh breeze riffled treetops on the wooded hills. Our morning newspaper predicted a two-day period of unmitigated fair weather, and I, with that long-bred respect for great city institutions which it is not easy to lose, was willing to accept this nuncio devoutly. I was sitting on the bank of our small creek, enjoying the willow shade and the assurance of good weather, when our neighbor, en route to drive his cows to fresh pasture, halted close beside me and enunciated the thunderous and oracular monosyllable: 'Rain!' I asked him, of course, the reason for this gloomy prediction, adding that in so sunny and cloudless a day I could discern no dismal portents. My neighbor extended a bony forefinger, and, following its direction, I saw three bullfrogs — big grandfather bullfrogs, grave and immobile and unblinking — squatting in a solemn row on the opposite bank. *One* bullfrog, it then developed, might be observed at any time without misgiving; *two* bullfrogs might forebode no ill; but when *three* bullfrogs arrayed themselves thus with military precision in a neat row, a deluge was definitely on the way.

Basis in scientific fact? None. But it remains to be recorded as actuality that within an hour after these three portentous frogs had thus displayed themselves to me in their stately ominous array heavy clouds came sailing over the hemlock-green top of Phudd Mountain and our parched countryside was drenched by the heaviest rain in a month.

Not all the auguries and portents which our Phudd soothsayers so dearly love and venerate are quite as piquant as this Omen of the Trinity of Frogs, but all have a kind of profound *classical* quality, as though deriving from some lost mythology and forgotten earth lore. This quality resides even in that commonest of local performances, the divination of approaching rain by means of the Portent of the Genuflecting

Kine. ('Kneeling cows' is, of course, the phrase by which it is described, but it seems to me that so ancient and earthy and solemn a process deserves the dignity of a vocabulary more antique and stately.)

When a herd of cows is pasturing, it will be observed as a rule that all of them are standing, or else that certain ones are standing while others are lying down. Either of these appearances is entirely normal for a herd to present, and is fraught with no solemn significance of impending elemental change. But now and again — and it is a spectacle seldom noted with any conscious awareness save by our rural friends who know its necromantic implications! — now and again *all* the cows in a herd, as though affected simultaneously by some subtle cosmic influence, will abruptly and almost in unison sink upon their knees in the green and clovery grass. Now this occurrence, to the weather prophets of Phudd, is an omen of even greater solemnity than the heralding of the frogs, and presages invariably the wildest kind of weather — generally a lurid and torrential thunderstorm.

Here, it seems to me, is unmistakably the flavor of an old mythology, as though this mass kneeling of the cattle were a kind of homage to the god of the impending storm, a kind of unified bovine obeisance to the thunderous threatenings of an angered Jove. It was by means of this Portent of the Genuflecting Kine that one of our rural sorcerers (a stolid Dutch pig farmer who lives a mile down the lane) was able to warn us a few weeks ago of the most furious electrical bombardment of the season — a ferocious Jovian onslaught that split trees, uprooted rocks, and killed a brown mare belonging to one of our neighbors who had depended upon the weather forecast in his paper and had neglected to heed the warning bewitchment of his cows.

I presume that in the reading of omens it is as elsewhere, the exception which proves

the rule, and that would account for the recent signal failure of the Token of the Tree Toads. This augury is a favorite of our friends, and it is one of the most deep-rooted tenets of their soothsayer's creed that the long-continued piping and crying of tree toads infallibly justifies the inference of foul weather ahead. For a week now the profound darkness of our nocturnal countryside has been continuously pierced with the most strident and even frantic outcries of little toads, propitiating, entreating a Jupiter Pluvius who must have a heart of stone. Night after night the small shrill wailings and pipings continue in an agonized chorus, but still the arch of the sky has no cloud in it and our meadow grows browner day by day. I have spoken to the Prophets of Phudd about this, but they are all of them, as befits practitioners of so ancient a mystic art, enigmatic.

But only a moment ago, as I sat here on a rock writing this complaint about the tree toads, I heard a little breeze come rustling down the slope of Phudd Hill, and, looking up, I saw that the green leaves of the maple trees were unmistakably *turning over* and exhibiting their silvery nether sides uppermost. *This* is as sure a presage of rain as exists in the whole haruspical catalogue of the whole Phudd Hill countryside! This turning and fluttering of the maple leaves, as though the tree reached out upturned and quivering supplicatory hands to the gods of the rain, cannot be misread.

In a little while, when the red sun has gone down behind the high hemlocks of Phudd Hill, and the cool evening smell of earth comes in our windows, we shall hear the 'rain hollering' of the robins, the omen which, as final warning, precedes the storm. And then will come the rain — and the Prophets of Phudd will be able to shake their heads and record another day when the 'newspaper feller' was mistaken. Yes, the tree toads were right. A little forehanded, possibly; that is all.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

It is an axiom of social history that during financial depressions labor troubles cease — until the clouds lift high enough for capitalist and worker to distinguish each from other and to resume traditional rôles on opposite sides of the economic equator. The rift in the clouds of despair which appeared in March of 1933, then, was also a precursor of the rift in the lute of economic accord which March 1934 marked with the discontinuance of the CWA. Now there is a further division of accord caused by the dominating attitude of the American Federation of Labor, as **George E. Sokolsky** points out in 'Labor's Fight for Power.' Mr. Sokolsky has long been noted as an authority on the Far East; since his return to America two years ago he has turned his mind to domestic problems, and has contributed a number of illuminating studies.

'Remarks: None' is the second story about line work we have published, the first being last month's 'Just Plain Nuts,' which was **William Wister Haines's** first public appearance. 'Most of my adult life,' he says, 'has been occupied with line work, and of course you can only write what you know. I intend to know more. For the time being, however, I am sick of the smell of ink. I have taken a job as a lineman and will go to work in the Newark interlocking next week. I have found before that a few weeks in a wire train makes the best vacation I know from this sedentary life.' *Slim*, his vivid and virile novel about linemen, will be published August 3 by the Atlantic Monthly Press. **Margaret Chanler's** *Roman Spring*, of which 'Delightful People' is the second delightful installment, will also be published by the Atlantic Monthly Press. Mrs. Chanler grew up in Rome as Margaret Terry, daughter of an American painter and half sister of Marion Crawford, the novelist. Her reminiscences combine both arts to draw an unforgettable picture of a way of living that is gone forever. **Muriel Sperry**, the Irish wife of the Dean of Harvard's Theological School, takes up the shillalah for her

native country in 'Try Your Hap against the Irishmen.' It will be a long day before any of her readers accept the invitation. **Arthur Pound** ('These Coils of Debt') combines detailed and practical knowledge of industry with a philosophic outlook. To reformers and manufacturers alike we commend him as a paradox of social, industrial, and common sense. Δ 'An Artifice of Dust' is the first poem we have published by **Lionel Wiggam**, a nineteen-year-old student at Northwestern University, who has been supporting himself by writing blood-and-thunder stories for the pulps while gaining rapid recognition as a poet. Δ When, last April, we published the 'Odyssey of a Sixty-Per-Center,' **Major R. Raven-Hart** found himself swamped with requests for further information about his canoeing adventures. 'Paddling through Europe' supplies some of the answers, and still further questions may be addressed to 'Les Lavandes,' au Liouquet, La Ciotat (B-du-R), France. The Major is happy to help beginners in his favorite sport, but it is only fair to remind them that International Reply coupons *are obtainable at any post office*. Δ Do you recognize 'The Club Secretary'? **Lord Dunsany** may *not* be expected to name him; the necessary clue is given. We need scarcely add that His Lordship is eligible for membership — indeed, might even found a Club for Dramatists. Δ 'Pioneers of Silence' is another response to appreciative readers, this time to **Margaret Prescott Montague's** brothers and sisters the deaf. Her 'Lucky Lady' brought many hundreds of requests for more about her personal experience.

Before he settled down to the 'Winter in the Woods' which he described so engagingly in a recent issue, **Glanville Smith** took some money given him by an aunt 'such as one usually has only the pleasure of reading about' and went traveling — among other places, to 'Suffolk with a Porpoise.' Now, he writes, 'it is the busy season in the tombstone trade, but I find it hard to keep my mind on the epitaphs.

I am learning that being an *Atlantic* author has its repercussions. For example, I have received from an unknown admirer a book on Barber-Shop Balladry written by himself. The possibility of more such repercussions makes the arrival each day of the noon mail train (two cars) a moment of emotion.' **Bradford K. Daniels** ('The Brook') has also retired to the wilderness, in the Puget Sound country, where he lives 'among his cherry trees and white Leghorns.' Δ 'The Birthday Tree' is imbued with the same spirit of maternal devotion that one finds in **Ann Bridge's** *Peking Picnic*, the Atlantic Prize Novel for 1932. Δ If the time has come for a 'Post-Obit for Post-Depressionists,' the form surely should be the classic form of satire that comes to us through Samuel Johnson's *London*, straight from Juvenal's rhetorical championship of 'the more sober virtues and ideas . . . of an educated but depressed . . . middle class.' And Leonard Bacon, perhaps the only living author who 'tends to think in couplets,' is entitled to assume the toga. Δ Those who know **Hilda Worthington Smith** only in her various official capacities, including her recent appointment to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, might never discover the Fairy Blossom of 'A Post Office in Fairyland.' Her friends recognize her, however, and know that, as Miss Smith says, 'given a beautiful countryside, the garden in moonlight or a bit of mountain road at dusk could easily be peopled by an imaginative child with her fairy friends.' Δ 'The Oxford Group Movement: An Appraisal' concludes the discussion of Buchmanism which **Henry P. Van Dusen**, Dean of Students at Union Theological Seminary, opened last month.

✓ ✓ ✓

P. O. for a Porpoise.

Dear Atlantic, —

I have just got a letter from my friend Douglas Bird, who tells me that the post office I saw in Woodbridge in 1929 was last year supplanted by a shiny new one; perhaps *Atlantic* readers who are prospective pilgrims to Woodbridge should be warned about this. He also says, — and it sounds strangely like an echo from my essay, proving that I write with some truth, eh? — 'Both Mother and I often talk about you, and especially during April when the daffodils are out.'

GLANVILLE SMITH
Cold Spring, Minnesota

Individual or group 'individualism'?

Dear Atlantic, —

I read with interest Mrs. Madeira's article on 'Our Burden of Choice,' in the June number. Her thesis seems to me debatable. If we are yielding authority to a dictator, as in Germany, or to a corporate body of dictators, as in Russia, simply because we wish to avoid the responsibility of making choices and governing our lives ourselves, it seems deplorable, nothing less than a neurotic regression to infantilism, a repudiation of the adult attitude to life. If, on the other hand, individualism is being modified in such a way as to extend the sense of personality from the individual to the group, if we are learning to think less of the importance of the individual and more of the importance of the nation or of mankind as a whole, I think it is a change for the better.

MARY THAYER FOX
Norristown, Pennsylvania

'You made us what we are to-day.'

Dear Atlantic, —

What a vast field of missionary work lies before Pringle Barret! For if there is truth in the old adage, 'The hand which rocks the cradle rules the world,' then the mothers of the race are responsible for instilling into the male mind its insufferable superiority complex; we superior males are under female domination from the cradle to college. 'You made us what we are to-day.'

JOHN B. WARREN
Berkeley, California

Ananias in Virginia.

Dear Atlantic, —

Being a native of Tennessee, I have always experienced something between pride and a wince when I have heard that state spoken of as holding the palm in producing great liars. Recently, however, I was thrilled to hear the following account from the lips of a man of this, my adopted state of Virginia. I think it surely eclipses anything a Tennessean ever even thought.

I noticed my friend was wearing a watch charm of a most unusual nature. It was made up of nine wild turkeys' toes. When I asked him about it, his reply was something like this: —

'Well, sir, I wuz once 'most put to it to know what to do. I never did like the idea of wastin' anything, and this-here problem I faced wuz jist that — how to git the most out o' what was a real good stroke o' fortune.

'I wuz out huntin' one mornin'. My luck had n't been nothin' extra, and it'd begun to rain; so I turned round, called my dog, and faced toward home kind o' disgusted like, when what d' you think? I heared a sound I knowed mighty well, and, lookin' up in the direction it come from,

Your Dentist's Detective

"It's a good thing we made these X-ray pictures. Here's a small hidden cavity which I could not discover without my X-ray detective."



POSTPONING a visit to your dentist is not postponing trouble. It is bringing it closer. Time and money will be saved by a visit to your dentist every six months. It is impossible to have good health if the teeth, gums and soft tissues of your mouth are not kept in good condition.

If your dentist advises X-ray pictures of your teeth, take his advice. With the X-ray to inform him, he knows the condition of the deeper structures, the roots and the tooth sockets. In many cases early cavities can be found only by X-rays. If you have pyorrhea he may discover it at a stage in which it can be successfully treated.

Because an aching tooth demands prompt attention it is usually far less dangerous to health than the undiscovered trouble-maker. A tooth may seem to be sound and healthy and yet hidden trouble may be brewing. Infection may exist at the root of a guilty tooth long before it is suspected that anything is wrong. Meanwhile, the surrounding bony structure is being broken

down and destroyed, while infection may be absorbed into the system through the blood stream. Such infection may damage the heart and other vital organs, may cause eye, ear, sinus, nerve, joint or digestive trouble.

When a firmly rooted tooth is to be extracted an X-ray picture may be needed to assist the dentist. Sometimes the roots are hooked or teeth may have failed to come through the gums. In such cases damage to the jaw-bone may result from a "blind" extraction.

If you have sound teeth and gums, then a correct diet, including some hard and "crunchy" food, will help to keep them healthy. Teeth, living parts of the body, are built by food. They need the minerals contained in eggs, milk, vegetables, fruits and cereals.

Metropolitan will be glad to send its free booklet, "Good Teeth." Address Booklet Dept. 834-T.



METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

FREDERICK H. ECKER, PRESIDENT

ONE MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N. Y.

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I seen what appeared to be more wild turkeys than ever I seen before. They wuz all on one branch of a white oak tree, about thirty feet from the ground. There they sot — nine of 'em, all in a row.

'Well, when my breath finally come back, I begun to consider what my duty wuz. I knowed right well I could kill one all right, maybe two; but it wuz a downright pity to let all the others git away. Natur'ly I thought o' gittin' off and tryin' a shot right through all nine o' them turkeys' heads, but I knowed mighty well nobody'd b'lieve me if I told 'em I got 'em that way. We've all heared that tale, but it's too gol-darned un-thinkable! I wanted to come at a method folks'd b'lieve. I've always been knowed as a truth-speakin' individual, and I did n't want to ruin my repitation with no high-soundin' tale like that.

'It wuz rainin' harder by now, and I thought it wuz high onto time for me to arrive at some conclusion. The turkeys had all quieted down, and there they sot, nine o' the prettiest young birds you ever seen, on a right straight limb, their toes all grippin' the branch jist alike — three toes over the front and one over the back of it.

'Well, sir, I calc'lated to git 'em all. So, after I'd took my bearin's a bit, I backed off up on a little rise and got a good bead on that limb. I wuz n't aimin' to hit none o' the turkeys, but jist the limb. When I thought I had it pretty well in line, I fired.

'Well, sir, it did n't give me no disappointment whatever. The bullet had hit centre and split that limb right down the middle, and every turkey on it had dropped his hind toe in that split. Then, quicker'n you know, the limb had closed back up, jist as I figgered it would, and there hung them birds all in a row. It wuz a mighty pretty sight. You understand they wuz n't dead; they wuz all jist caught by the toe. I calc'lated this would be a right pretty sort o' thing to take home and show my friends. It ain't everybody comes in with a branch o' nine livin' wild turkeys. So I clumb up with my hatchet and chopped off that limb, kind o' careful like to keep from losin' any o' the fruit; and then I carried it down with me and put it in the buggy.

'I got in and give the word to go, when what d' you think? The horse started off like he always does when he's goin' home; but that buggy sot right there where it wuz! I could n't make out at first what the matter wuz. But then I seen it all. I had put some new traces in before I left home — a pair o' rawhide ones I'd got from a mail-order house.

'I want to tell you, never git rawhide traces. The rain had got them traces wet and they wuz jist stretchin' somethin' awful. As fast as the horse wuz goin', all he could do wuz to take up the slack in them traces, they wuz stretchin' so fast. It wuz kind o' uncanny like to sit there and

see that horse gallopin' right off from me, when all the time he wuz hitched to the buggy. All I could do wuz sit there and jist think how I'd been done by that mail-order house. The horse by now must've got all the way home and put hisself in the stable.

'But while I wuz sittin' and thinkin', somethin' else happened. It quit rainin', and the sun suddenly come out and dried those traces. They dried so fast that that buggy-load o' turkeys and me wuz jerked with one almighty jerk all the way home. I never hope to travel as fast as we done that time! I did n't see nothin' pass. All I knowed wuz when we got there. We hit the barn so hard that I wuz plumb spilt out o' one side o' the buggy. But the worst wuz, when we come through the gate that limb must've scraped the gatepost with consid'ble force. All them turkeys wuz scraped off of it as clean as soap! When I looked up, they wuz all flyin' away. I looked at the limb, and all there wuz left wuz the nine hind toes.

'Well, that's how I come by 'em. You wuz askin' me how I got 'em, and now I've told you.'

At the time, there seemed to be no visible point of attack on so lucid an account of the origin of the watch charm, and I parted from my friend, nominally a believer. But some day I hope to meet him again. I want to ask him a question. I want to ask him why just *nine* hind toes. There should have been eighteen!

JO BANKS
Lynchburg, Virginia

A further word to the deaf.

To supplement her article in this issue, Miss Montague writes: —

'If you must be deaf, or are interested in some deaf child, let me suggest that you get in touch with the Volta Bureau, 1537 35th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. It welcomes letters of inquiry, sends out innumerable pamphlets, publishes the *Volta Review*, and in every way seeks to give information and encouragement both to the hard of hearing and to the congenitally deaf. Its service is national and is free.

'Among other helpful things, the Volta Bureau will tell you of the new vibratory method of teaching the congenitally deaf lately developed by Miss Sophia Alcorn. By this method, to quote from the *Auditory Outlook*: "Deaf children . . . are able to understand speech by merely placing one hand against the teacher's cheek. Through recognizing speech movements by touch, they learn to recognize them by sight, and they develop into phenomenal lip readers. They become so familiar with the movements of the cheek muscles that they can understand a person whose whole mouth is covered. I have no idea how they do it. It seems to me they develop a faculty which is dormant in the rest of us."